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THERON and ASPASIO:

OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Moſt *Important* and *Intereſting* Subjects.

By JAMES HERVEY, A. M.
Rector of *Weſton-Favell*, in *Northamptonſhire*.
Author of the MEDITATIONS, &c.

For Zion's *ſake will I not hold my Peace, and for* Jeruſalem's *ſake I will not reſt, until the* Righteouſneſs *thereof go forth as Brightneſs, and the* Salvation *thereof as a Lamp that burneth.* Iſa. lxii. 1.

VOL. II.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

DUBLIN:

Printed for J. FISHER, at the *Bible* in *Little Ship-ſtreet*.
M DCC LXIV.

A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES.

DIALOGUE IX.

THERON, impreſſed with the laſt Converſation, was very deſirous to reſume the Subject, and renew the important Debate. With this View, He conducted his Friend into a Retirement, commodious for the Purpoſe.

They enter a ſpacious *Lawn*; which lay oppoſite to the Houſe, and ſtretched itſelf in the Form of an expanded Fan. The Mounds, on either Side, were dreſſed in Verdure; and ran out in a ſlanting Direction. The whole, to an Eye placed at a Diſtance, bore the Reſemblance of a magnificent *Viſta*; contracting, by ſlow Degrees, its Dimenſions; and leſſening, at laſt, into a Point. Which, the regular and graceful Seat, with all imaginable Dignity, ſupplied.

Nature had ſunk the Lawn into a gentle *Decline*. On whoſe ample Sides, were Oxen browzing, and Lambs friſking. The luſty Droves lowed, as they paſſed; and the thriving Flocks, bleated welcome Muſic in their Maſter's Ear.—Along the Midſt of this verdant Slope, ran a ſpacious and extenſive *Walk*. Which, coated with Gravel, and fenced with Palliſadoes, looked like a plain Stripe of Brown, interſecting a Carpet of the brighteſt Green.—At the Bottom, two handſome *Canals*, copiouſly ſtocked with Fiſh, floated to the Breeze. Whoſe Waters, beheld from

every front Room in the Houſe, had a fine Effect upon the Sight! not without a refreſhing Influence on the Imagination.—At the Extremity of one, ſtood a ſtately *Colonade*. The Roof was elevated on Pillars of the *Ionic* Order; and the Area ſlabbed with Stones, neatly ranged in the Diamond-Faſhion. Several Foreſt-chairs accommodated the Anglers with a Seat, while the bending Dome ſupplied them with a Shade.

Correſponding, and on the Margin of the other Canal, was erected a *Summer-houſe*, of a very ſingular Kind.——The lower Part, had an Opening towards the North. It was cool; it was gloomy; and had never ſeen the Sun. It carried the romantic Air of a *Grotto*, or rather the penſive Appearance of a *Hermit's Cell*. The Outſide was coarſe and rugged, with protuberant Stones. Partly overſpread with Ivy, partly covered with Moſs, it ſeemed to be the Work, of antient Years—You deſcend, by Steps of Turf, through a low and narrow Door. A ſcanty Iron Grate, inſtead of a large ſweeping Sash, tranſmits a glimmering Light; juſt ſufficient to diſcover the inner Structure. Which appeared, like one continued Piece of Rock-work; a Cavern cut, You would imagine, from the ſurrounding Quarry.——*Above*, hung an irregular Arch; with an Aſpect, rather threatening, than inviting. *Below*, lay a Paving of homely Pebbles; in ſome Places, a little furrowed, as though it had been worn by the frequent Tread of ſolitary Feet. *All around*, were Ruſticity and Solemnity; Solemnity, never more viſibly ſeen, than through a Gloom.—The Furniture, of the ſame *groteſque* Faſhion, with the Apartment. A Bench hewed, You would ſuſpect, by Nature's Chizzel, out of the ſolid Stone. A Sort of Couch, compoſed of ſwelling Moſs, and ſmall fibrous Roots.—From one Corner, trickled a pure Spring: which crept, with a bubbling Moan, along the channeled Floor; till its healthy Current was collected into a Baſon, rudely ſcooped from the Ground. On the Edge of this little Receptacle, lay chained a ruſty Bowl; and over it, ſtood an antique worm-eaten Table.

ble.——On the leaſt obſcure Part of the Wall, you diſcern, *dimly* diſcern, a Parchment Scroll; inſcribed with that ſage, but mortifying Admonition; VANITY OF VANITIES! ALL IS VANITY!

Over this Receſs, ſo pleaſingly horrid, and adapted to ſolemn Muſings, aroſe an open and airy *Belvidere*. You aſcend by winding Stairs; and coming from the *uncouth* Abode below, are ſweetly ſurpriſed with an *elegant* Hexagon. — The Cieling lofty, and decorated with the ſofteſt, richeſt, almoſt flowing Fret-work. The Wainſcot, in large Pannels of Oak, retained its native Auburn: ſo *beautifully plain*, that, like an amiable Countenance, it would have been diſfigured, rather than improved, by the moſt coſtly Paint. On this were diſpoſed, in gilded Frames, and to great Advantage, a Variety of entertaining *Landſcapes*. But none ſurpaſſed, none equalled, all were a Foil to, the noble lovely Views, which the Windows commanded. ——The Chimney-piece, of white ſhining Marble, ſtreaked with Veins of vivid Red. *Over it*, was carved a fine Feſtoon of artificial, *in it*, was ranged a choice Collection of natural Flowers.—On a Table of gloſſy Walnut, lay a portable *Teleſcope*; attended with *Thomſon's Seaſons*, and *Vanierii Prædium Ruſticum* *.

The Whole was fitted up in the higheſt Taſte, and furniſhed with every pleaſurable Ornament. On purpoſe to harmonize with that *laviſh Gaiety*, which ſeemed to ſmile over all the Face of Nature. On purpoſe to correſpond with that *vernal Delight*, which came breathing on the Wings of every fragrant Gale. I may add, on purpoſe to remind the Beholder of thoſe *immortal Manſions*, which are decorated with Images

 infinitely

* *Vanierii Prædium Ruſticum*——A moſt elegant *Latin Poem:* which treats of every remarkable Peculiarity, relating to the Buſineſs of a Country Life, or the Furniture of a Country Seat.—— It entertains us with a Deſcription of the moſt *agreeable* Objects; in an eaſy Flow, of the *pureſt* Language, and moſt *muſical* Numbers.

It is, I think, one continued Beauty. Superior to every Thing of the Kind, I have met with among the Moderns; and ſcarcely, if at all, unworthy the firſt Genius of the *Auguſtan* Age. *Uni Virgilio ſecundus, & pæne par.*

infinitely more ſplendid, with Objects unſpeakably more glorious: where holy Beings will ſpend, not a few vacant Hours in refined Amuſement, but a boundleſs Eternity in the Conſummation of Joy.—For, to a well-turned Mind, Nature is a Preceptor; and theſe are her *inſtructive* Leſſons. To the pure in Heart, even Senſe is edifying; and theſe are its *delicate* Moralities.

The redundant Waters of the Canal, rolled off in a ſpreading *Caſcade*. Which, tumbling from many a little Precipice, ſoothed the Air with a Symphony of ſoft and gurgling Sounds. Nor ever intermitted the obliging Office,

From Morn to Noon, from Noon to dewy Eve.

But when the fanning *Breezes* dropt their Wings; when the feathered Choir were huſhed in Sleep; when not ſo much as a chirping Graſhopper, was heard throughout the Meads; this liquid Inſtrument ſtill played its *Solo:* ſtill purſued its buſy Way, and warbled, as it flowed, melodious Murmurs.

Aſp. Such, *Theron*; ſo uniform, uninterrupted, and invariable, ſhould be *our* Conformity to the divine Law. ——But alas! thoſe ſacred Precepts are ſo *exceeding broad*, that the moſt inlarged human Obedience, is far from being commenſurate to their Extent: ſo *abſolutely holy*, that our higheſt Attainments fall vaſtly ſhort of their exalted Perfection.—How then can We expect Juſtification, from ſuch a conſummate Rule? How dare We place our Dependance, upon ſuch imperfect Duties? Eſpecially, before a G O D of unerring Diſcernment, and immaculate Purity.

Ther. Becauſe Mankind are incapable of pleaſing their M A K E R, by yielding an *abſolute* and *invariable* Obedience to the moral Law; does it follow from thence, that they cannot render themſelves acceptable to Him, by an univerſal Courſe of ſincere Obedience?

Aſp. I think, it follows from what has been already obſerved. If you deſire new Arguments, they are at hand.

The

The Law, says the Teacher of the *Gentiles*, *is the Miniſtration of Condemnation* *. How can this be true, if it requires no more than a *ſincere* Obedience; ſuch as is proportioned to our infirm State? If this be ſufficient to juſtify, and intitle Us to our CREATOR's Favour; the Law ceaſes to be the Miniſtration of Condemnation. It becomes (which is flatly contradictory to the Apoſtle's Doctrine) the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs.

The Law is ſtyled, by the ſame inſpired Teacher, *A School-maſter to* bring Us to *CHRIST* †. How can it, upon your Suppoſition, be qualified for ſuch an Office? If a ſincere Obedience be the Whole of its Demands, it can no longer direct Us to *CHRIST*; it will no longer deliver Us over to a REDEEMER's Merit; but muſt draw and attach Us to *itſelf*. Teaching Us to look upon its Precepts, and our own conſcientious Obſervance of them, as the Tenure of eternal Life.

Do You inſiſt upon a third Proof? A third preſents itſelf. Not ſo much founded on Argumentation, as deduced from Example.—How was *Abraham* ‡, The Friend of GOD, and Father of the Faithful, juſtified? By a Courſe of ſincere Obedience? No; but

* 2 *Cor.* iii. 7. In *this* Place, I apprehend, the Apoſtle means the *moral* Law, and that principally. As that alone was *written and engraven on Stones*. Elſewhere, I believe, He uſes the Word in a larger Senſe; and intends to exclude *all* Law whatever, from bearing any Share in our Juſtification.

† *Gal.* iii. 24. Παιδαγωγος. *A School-maſter:* Who pretends not to *finiſh* the Education of Youth; but directs them to, and prepares them for, higher Studies, or nobler Employs. The Law, in like manner, aims not at furniſhing Us with a Title to Happineſs: but *fits*, *diſpoſes*, and *diſciplines* Us, for the All-ſufficient REDEEMER.

Some have thought, that εις Χριστον ſignifies, *Until the Coming of CHRIST*. But this will hardly conſiſt with the Genius of the Language, or with the Import of the following Clauſe, *That We might be juſtified by Faith* —— Beſides, this would confine the Efficacy of the Law, to that Period of Time, which preceded our LORD's Incarnation. Whereas, it *ſtill* does, and *always* will *act*, (until this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption) in a Way of Subſerviency to his Merits.

‡ See the following Note.

by Faith in the promiſſed MESSIAH. *Abraham worked not*, with a View to obtain Juſtification; *but believed on Him, who juſtifieth the Ungodly.*——How was *David* *, the Man after GOD's own Heart, juſtified? By his Zeal for the LORD, and by his eminent Services? No; but by a Righteouſneſs imputed: even that Righteouſneſs of the bleſſed REDEEMER, through which *Iniquity is forgiven, and Sin pardoned* — And can we be ſaid to walk *humbly*, or can We be thought to walk *ſurely*, if, refuſing to tread in the Steps of theſe exemplary Saints, We divert into a Path of our own deviſing?

Ther. "Of our own deviſing!"—No, my Friend: there is a *milder* Law introduced by the Goſpel, condeſcending and merciful to our Infirmities, which accepts of Sincerity inſtead of perfect Obedience.

Aſp. When was this milder Law introduced, and the ſtricter abrogated?—Not upon the Entrance of Sin, I preſume. At this Rate, the original Law muſt be the Creature of a *few Days*, perhaps of a *few Hours* only. But can We imagine, that the All-wiſe and Unchangeable GOD would ordain a Syſtem of Precepts to be diſannulled, as ſoon as enacted?——Not in our LORD's Time, I am very certain. That holy Commandment, which requires *ſupreme* Love to GOD, and *perfect* Charity to Men, He aſſures Us, was ſtill in Force †. Nay, it is evident, from the Nature of the DUTY, and from our Relation of one another, That it always will be in Force; that it never can ceaſe; but is neceſſary and everlaſting.

"A milder

* Theſe two Examples are, with the trueſt Judgment ſelected, and with the utmoſt Propriety applied. *Rom.* iv. 1, *&c. Rom.* iv. 6, *&c.*——*Abraham* was the moſt illuſtrious Pattern of Piety, among the *Jewiſh* Patriarchs: *in Glory there was None like Him*, Eccluſ. xliv. 19. *David* was the moſt zealous and ſeraphic of their Kings: *A Man after GOD's own Heart*, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. If neither of theſe was juſtified by *His own* Obedience; but each by *an imputed* Righteouſneſs: If they both obtained Acceptance with GOD, not as *upright* Beings, who might claim it; but as *ſinful* Creatures, who muſt implore it; the Conſequence is glaring. It is ſuch, as muſt ſtrike every attentive Underſtanding, and muſt affect every individual Perſon.

† Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

"A milder Law, condescending to our Infirmities."—What can be the Purport of such an Institution? It must be supposed to speak the following Language, "Be it known unto You, O Children of *Adam*, that "You are no longer injoined to love the LORD with "all your Strength, nor to love your Neighbour as "Yourselves.—*Once*, indeed, I insisted upon absolute "Purity of Heart; *now* I can dispense with some "Degree of evil Concupiscence.—Since *CHRIST* is "come, and his Gospel preached; You need not al-"ways be clothed with Humility; but may feel some "little Emotions of Pride.—In short; because You "are *weak*, I will *connive*; or even accommodate my "Demands to your infeebled and depraved Condi-"tion."

Not to urge, (what must be shocking to every Ear) That such a Doctrine would make the HOLY ONE of GOD, a Minister of Sin; and the Gospel of our Salvation, a Patent for Licentiousness. Let me only ask—Does this agree with our LORD's Declaration? *One Jot or Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled* *.—Is this suitable to the Perfections of the Divine LEGISLATOR? *With whom is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning* †?—Will this consist with the avowed Resolution of the Almighty JEHOVAH? *He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable* ‡.

Ther. However You may decry, what I call the milder Law, St. *Paul* asserts it to be the *Christian* Scheme. This he strenuously argues for, as the only Scheme by which any Man can be justified in the Sight of GOD.

Asp. Does He, *Theron?* In what Epistle? What Chapter? What Verse?—He says, addressing Himself to the *Galatian* Converts; *I do not frustrate the Grace of GOD; for, if Righteousness come by the Law, CHRIST is dead in vain* ‖. From which Passage, We learn two very momentous Truths. That, were

* Matt. v. 18. † Jam. i. 17. ‡ Isai. xlii. 21.
‖ Gal. ii. 21.

we to derive a juſtifying Righteouſneſs from the Law, this would not only be *derogatory* to the Honour of Grace, but *ſubverſive* of its very Being.—That, by ſeeking Juſtification through our own conſcientious Behaviour, We make, as far as in Us lies, the Death of *CHRIST* a *vain* Thing, for which there was no Occaſion, and of which there is no Uſe.

To the ſame Purpoſe it is written in that invaluable Epiſtle to the *Romans* *; *If they which are of the Law be Heirs*; if they, who truſt to their own Performance of the Law, are thereby intitled to the heavenly Inheritance; *Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none Effect.*——See now, my Friend, the Tendency of your Opinion! It is not a mere ſpeculative Miſtake; an Error of inconſiderable Conſequence; but ſuch as ſtrikes at the Fundamentals of the Goſpel. Inſtead of being the only *Chriſtian* Scheme, it totally overthrows † *Chriſtianity* itſelf. For, it would render the Promiſe abortive, and ſuperſede the Neceſſity of Faith. It would deſtroy the very Exiſtence of Grace, and make even the Death of *CHRIST* a ſuperfluous Tranſaction.

Ther. This I ſee, *Aſpaſio*; That the Method of obtaining Acceptance on Account of our own Sincerity, is a benign Expedient; ſuch as correſponds with the compaſſionate Nature of the DEITY; and is, what the Apoſtle ſtyles, *being juſtified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.*

Aſp.

* Rom. iv. 14.

† St. *Paul* ſays of thoſe Preachers, who taught Juſtification by the Works of the Law, *They would pervert*, or (as the Original μεθαστρεψαι may be tranſlated) ſubvert and overthrow *the Goſpel of CHRIST.*——To pervert, give a *wrong Turn*, or a *falſe Colour*, ſeems not to expreſs fully the Apoſtle's Idea, nor to preſerve the native Energy of his Argument. The *Greek* Word is equivalent to the *Hebrew* הפך, which we generally render *evertere*. Gal. i. 7.

It may be worth our while, to tranſcribe *Beza*'s Deſcant upon the Paſſage; which is no leſs pertinent, than it is important. *Quid enim magis contrarium eſt Fidei, ſive gratuitæ Juſtificationi, quàm Juſtificatio ex Lege, ſive Meritis, non CHRISTI ſed noſtris? Itaque qui volunt iſta duo conciliare, magis etiam ſunt inepti, quàm ſi quis conetur Lucem cum Tenebris, Mortem cum Vitâ conjungere.*

Aſp. How! To be juſtified by Faith, and juſtified by Sincerity, the *ſame* Thing?—Is it poſſible, that theſe ſhould be *equivalent* Terms?—Let me illuſtrate my Query by a Similitude, which our preſent Situation ſuggeſts. Sometimes, an eaſy Compariſon is more convincing, than a laboured Argument.

From this pleaſing Eminence, We command an extenſive View of the Country. Our Eye connects the artleſs Grandeur of Nature, with the elegant Embelliſhments of the Summer-houſe. Nor is the public Road the leaſt entertaining Part of the Scene. Becauſe, it preſents Us with a *moving Picture*; with a perpetual Succeſſion of new objects.—How many Travellers have paſſed in Review, ſince We took our Seat in this agreeable Elevation! Juſt at this Inſtant, a *Stage-coach* bolts out of the Lane: filled, I preſume, with Paſſengers, that reſide in the Neighbourhood, or are to lodge in the next Market-town. We will ſuppoſe them ſet down at their Journey's End. An Acquaintance viſits them: congratulates them on their Arrival: and aſks that cuſtomary Queſtion, "How they came?"—"We came, ſay they, without walking a Step our-"ſelves; yet by walking, as well, and as far, as We "were able."—Is this Anſwer *intelligible?* Are theſe Methods of travelling *confiſtent?* So intelligible is my Friend's Doctrine. So conſiſtent is Juſtification, vouchſafed *without* the Deeds of the Law; and Juſtification obtained, by performing the Deeds of the Law, *as well* as We are able.

Ther. Without the Law, ſignifies, Without the Neceſſity of an exact and unerring Conformity to it.

Aſp. This is not *without*, but *by* the Law, qualified in the Rigour of its Demands, and departing ſomewhat from the Perfection of its Precepts. Could You affirm, with any Propriety, that this Part of the Hemiſphere is *without the Sun?* Becauſe, an intervening Cloud has moderated its Fervour, and abated its Glare.

What ſays the Apoſtle? His Words in another Place, will determine his Meaning in this. If a State of Acceptance with GOD, be *of Works*; be referable to our own Obedience, whether ſincere or perfect;

it

it is no more of Grace *. Works and Grace, in Point of Juſtification, are irreconcilable Oppoſites †. On this Principal they cannot ſtand together. One muſt ſupplant and overthrow the other.

But why do I ſpeak of Grace? If my Friend's Opinion prevail, Grace is at an end. What we took to be the Goſpel, turns out a Covenant of Works. Salvation ceaſes to be a free Gift, and becomes a neceſſary Payment. For, *to Him that worketh*, that performeth what the Law requires, *is the Reward not reckoned of Grace*; *but* He may claim it, as his Due; it muſt be paid Him, as Matter *of Debt* ‡.

Ther. You take no Notice of what I urged, concerning the *Benignity* of this Scheme; and how much it magnifies the *Clemency* of the great LEGISLATOR.

Aſp. But why ſhould Clemency erect its Throne, on the *Ruins* of almoſt every other Attribute?——This Method would diſhonour the *Veracity* of GOD; which has denounced a Curſe, upon every Deviation from his revealed Will.——It would depreciate the *Adminiſtration* of his Juſtice; which cannot but puniſh, whatever violates his ſacred Precepts.——It would greatly derogate from the *Dignity* of his Law; and make it a mere Thing of Wax. To bend; and truckle; and take its Form, from the Sin and Weakneſs of human Nature.

Ther. Will the divine Law then make no favourable Allowances for human Infirmities, for conſtitutional Faults, and Strength of Paſſion?

Aſp. Far be it from me to repreſent the Law of the MOST HIGH, either more ſtrict, or more yielding, than it really is. To avoid all Poſſibility of ſuch

* *Rom.* xi. 6. The Paſſage produced by *Aſpaſio*, refers *immediately* to the Doctrine of Election, and but *remotely* to the Privilege of Juſtification. However, as the former includes the latter, if *that* be perfectly free, *this* cannot be the Conſequence of Works. The Argument, therefore, I apprehend, is concluſive, though the Proof is not ſo direct.

† *E diametro inter ſe opponuntur, Meſes & JESUS CHRISTUS: Lex & Promiſſio: facere & credere: Opera & Fides: Merces & Donum.* BENGEL.

‡ Rom. iv. 4.

ſuch a Miſtake, let us hear the Declaration of the Law itſelf. *Curſed is every One that continueth not in all Things, that are written in the Book of the Law to do them* *.

Every One; without any Exception of Perſons; without any regard to Pleas, either of human Weakneſs, or violent Temptation.——*That continueth not*; it is not enough to obſerve theſe holy Commandments, in the genetal Tenour of our Converſation. Our Courſe of Obedience muſt be without any Intermiſſion; from the earlieſt Dawn of Reaſon, to the lateſt Period of Life.——*In all Things*; We muſt refrain from all the Sins that are forbidden, and from every Approach towards them. We muſt practiſe all the Virtues, that are injoined, and in their full Extent of Perfection.

In a Word; the Law inſiſts upon Obedience, perfect in its *Principle*; perfect in all its *Parts*; perfect in every *Degree*; and in each of theſe Reſpects *perpetual* †.—The leaſt Deficiency in any one Particular, renders Us liable to Vengeance; and, notwithſtanding any Repentance for Tranſgreſſions, notwithſtanding all Pretenſions to Sincerity of Heart, ſubjects Us to the Curſe.

Theron pauſed.—He ſeemed to be ſtruck with Surprize.—But rallying his Thoughts, replied; If this be the Senſe of the Paſſage, Who of all Fleſh can be ſaved?

Aſp. Say rather; If the Extent of the divine Law be ſo inlarged, if its Demands be ſo high, and its Sanction ſo awfully rigorous; then muſt every Mouth be ſtopped—then is all the World become guilty before GOD—and, *by the Works of the Law ſhall no Man living be juſtified.*

Ther.

* Gal. iii. 10.

† That the Law inſiſts upon an Obedience *abſolutely perfect*, will be farther evident to the attentive Reader; if He conſiders the Tenour of St. *Paul*'s Argumentation, in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and to the *Galatians*. Particularly *Rom.* iii. 23. iv. 15. *Gal.* iii. 21.

Ther. Will not such excessively severe Doctrine, drive People into Despondency, or even drown them in *Despair?*

Asp. No, *Theron*, unless it be *such* a Despair, as is the Parent of heavenly Hope; and productive of those amiable Twins, Peace and Joy. A Despair, I mean, of being reconciled to our offended GOD, and of obtaining eternal Happiness, by any Satisfaction or any Duties of our own.

Ther. Surely, You forget the gracious *Manifesto*, published by the condescending KING of Heaven; *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to what a Man hath, not according to what he hath not* *. Is it not plain from this Text, that infinite Goodness will admit our honest, though imperfect Endeavours? And, since We are not able to pay an *unsinning* will mercifully accept our *best* Obedience?

Asp. I do not forget, but possibly my Friend may misapply the gracious *Manifesto*—To whom was the Word of this Consolation sent? To true Believers; who had *given their ownselves to the LORD* †; who *were established in CHRIST* ‡; *and abounded in Faith* §. —If You likewise, my dear *Theron*, acknowledge Yourself a vile Sinner in your worst, and an unprofitable Servant in your best Estate: if, in consequence of this Acknowledgment, You fly for Refuge to the Wounds of a *crucified* SAVIOUR; and rely, for Salvation, only on *his Obedience* unto Death: then, You imitate those *Corinthian* Converts. Then You may apply that indulgent Declaration to Yourself. And then would I venture to address You, in the elegant and cheering Language of the royal PREACHER; *Go thy Way, eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart; for GOD* now *accepteth* ‖ both thy Person, and thy Performances.

But,

* 2 Cor. viii. 12. † 2 Cor. viii. 5. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 21. § 2 Cor. viii. 7.

‖ *Eccles.* ix. 7.—*Aspasio*'s Remark discovers an *Ambiguity* in the Word *accepted*.—If People mean, That sincere Obedience shall be accepted, as *their justifying* Righteousness; as that which constitutes their Title to everlasting Felicity: the Proposition is extremely

But, if You overlook the Righteousness of the blessed *JESUS*; if You depend upon Yourself and your own Attainments; You are (how shall I speak it!) not accepted, but accursed. In such a Case, You have already heard your Doom denounced by the Leader of the *Jews*, and may hear it ratified by the Apostle of the *Gentiles*; *As many as are of the Works of the Law*, who seek Justification by their own Observance of its Commands, *are under the Curse* †.

Ther. Under the Curse! Because, our Attempts to obey, though faithfully exerted, are attended with Defects! Is not this unreasonable and shocking? *Unreasonable*, that the GOD of Justice should establish a Law of such consummate Perfection, as no Child of *Adam* can, even with his utmost Assiduity and Care, fulfil? *Shocking*, that the GOD of Mercy should thunder out so severe a Denunciation, on the least inadvertent Breach, on every unavoidable Failure? —— This exceeds the relentless Rigour of *Draco*, or the tyrannical Impositions of the *Ægyptian* Task-masters. *Draco* is said to have written his Laws in Blood. Yet He never enacted such Institutions, as were absolutely too strict and difficult to be observed. And, though the *Ægyptian* Task-masters insisted upon the full Tale of Bricks, without allowing the necessary Proportion of Straw, yet the Punishment they inflicted, was incomparably less than everlasting Destruction.

Asp If GOD Almighty, in delivering his Law to fallen Mankind, intended to propose the *Means* of their *Justification*; your Argument would be valid, and your Inference undeniable. But the SUPREME LEGISLATOR had a very different, a far more mysterious Design——However, before I proceed to touch

extremely false.——If they mean, That the sincere Obedience of Believers, though very imperfect in itself, shall be *graciously regarded* in *CHRIST*, and find Favour through his all recommending Merit: the Sentiment is unquestionably true ——Is Sincerity the *Effect of Faith?* Then We may rejoice in it, with the happy Apostle, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. Would Sincerity be the *Condition of our Justification?* Then We must renounce it, with holy *Job*, Chap. ix. 15.

† Gal. iii. 10.

touch upon this Point, let me desire to know *your* Opinion.

For what Reasons, think you, was the Law ordained?

Ther. For what Reasons?—To deter Men from the Commission of Vice, and excite them to the Practice of Virtue — To set before them a Rule for their Conduct; which if they diligently observe, they shall be *rewarded* with eternal Happiness; which if they presumptuously transgress, they shall be *punished* with eternal Misery.

Asp. If Man had never fallen, this Doctrine had been sound Divinity; and this Method, a practicable Scheme. But, ever since the *Fall*, such a Way of Salvation, is somewhat like the *North-East* Passage. As Mountains of Ice, and the severest Rigours of Winter, block up *this:* so, extreme Impotence in Man, and the utmost Perfection in the Law, bar up *that.*—— *The Law*, saith the Apostle, *is weak*; is incapable of furnishing Us with a Title to the heavenly Felicity *. Not through any defect in its Precepts, but *through the Flesh*: through the Inability of our degenerate Nature.

Yet I must confess, You are not alone in your Opinion. Multitudes have unwarily entertained the same Notion. Not apprehensive, that they frustrate hereby the Grace of GOD, and render it of none Effect with regard to themselves.——If You examine the *scriptural* Account, You will find it quite of another Strain.

Ther. Pray let me hear the scriptural Account. For, whenever those DIVINE ORACLES speak, I am all Attention. Wherever they interpose their Authority, I am all Submission.

Asp. By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin †. Far from being our Justifier, it is our Accuser. It arraigns

* *Rom.* viii. 3. Therefore he says in another Place; *If there had been a Law given, which could have given Life. Gal.* iii. 21. It is the same way of speaking, and intended to denote the very same *Impossibility*, which is implied in that Speech of *JEHOVAH* to *Abraham*; *If a Man can number the Dust of the Earth.* Gen. xiii. 16.

† Rom. iii. 20.

raigns and proves Us guilty. It demonſtrates, beyond all Poſſibility of Contradiction, that the very beſt among Us, have failed and come ſhort of our Duty; nay, that, the very beſt among Us, have done amiſs, and dealt wickedly.

I was alive without the Law once, ſays the Apoſtle ‡. I thought myſelf upright and holy; and intitled, by virtue of theſe Qualifications, to Life eternal. *But when the Commandment came*, ſhining in its Purity, and operating with Power, *Sin revived*; a clear and lively Senſe of Guilt ſhot, like a piercing Ray, through all my Soul. I ſaw myſelf chargeable with many paſt Provocations, I felt myſelf ſubject to much remaining Corruption. In conſequence of which *I died*; my vain Conceits were blaſted; my preſumptuous Hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myſelf, juſtly liable to Condemnation and Death.

Ther. It had this Effect on *Saul*, when He was a malignant and barbarous Perſecutor. But, when People are *virtuous* and *benevolent*, what purpoſe does it then ſerve?

Aſp. A very important one. Yet, ſuch as may, probably, at the firſt Hearing, affect You with a little ſurpriſe. *The Law entered*, ſays the Apoſtle, *that the Offence might*——

Ther. Be *reſtrained*, no doubt.

Aſp. That the Offence might *abound* §, is the Aſſertion.

Ther. Surpriſing indeed! Is it poſſible that GOD's Law ſhould give Countenance to Sin? Nay, add Spurs to the Sinner?

Aſp. Let Us beware of miſtaking our ſacred Caſuiſt. The Law entered, not that the *Commiſſion* of Sin might be *authorized*, but that the *Abundance* of our Sins might be *manifeſted*. That all Mankind, even your virtuous Perſons, may perceive the great Multitude of their Iniquities; the greater Impurity of their Hearts ‖; together with the utter Imperfection

‡ Rom. vii. 9. § Rom. v. 20.

‖ *And* therefore *was Law giv'n them, to evince*
Their natural Pravity. MILT. B. XII. 287.

tion of their higheſt Attainments, and beſt Services.

This End could not be anſwered by a Law, relaxed in its Demands, or warping to our Weakneſs; only by a Syſtem of Precepts, *every* Way exact, and in *all* Degrees perfect.——Whoever would repreſent to his Neighbour, the Spots that ſully, or the Scars that diſfigure his Countenance, muſt effect the Deſign, not by a ſtained, but by a pure Mirror.

Ther. The Knowledge of Sin, and a Conviction of our exceeding Sinfulneſs!——Theſe are Intentions, which I ſhould not have ſuſpected.

Aſp. Theſe are not all. There is another Intention of the Law, equally neceſſary, and no leſs awful. *It reveals the Wrath of GOD, againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men* * ——Having ſet before the Sinner, his innumerable Offences, and enormous Guilt; it denounces the Doom, which He deſerves. It unſheaths the Sword of Juſtice, and threatens the Offender with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the LORD.

Ther. A modern Writer ſuppoſes, that GOD may *ſet aſide* the Law, in favour of frail Men. I might far more reaſonably ſuppoſe, that He would *mitigate* the Law, on the ſame Conſideration. But what you urge, makes me afraid to lean on ſo precarious a Prop.

Aſp To look for Comfort and Salvation from this Quarter, would be *to lean*, as the *Arabian* Proverb ſpeaks, *on a Wave of the Sea*: which will not only fail to ſupport, but will certainly ſwallow up, the unadviſed and raſh Depender.

No, *Theron*; rather than the divine Law ſhould loſe its Honours, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were laid in Aſhes; the antient World was deſtroyed with a Deluge; the preſent Frame of Nature is deſtined to the Flames, and all its unholy Inhabitants will be condemned to Hell. —— Nay, rather than the *leaſt tittle* ſhould paſs unaccompliſhed, its Curſe has been executed on GOD's own SON, and all its Injunctions have

* Rom. i. 18.

have been fulfilled in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST.*

Ther. As I dare not confide in the modern provisionary *Salvo*, so neither can I accede to your severe and terrifying Notions. —— The Laws of a wise and beneficent Governor, are calculated for the *Good* of his Subjects. What Good, what Advantage can accrue to Us, from receiving such a Sentence, and possessing such Convictions?

Asp. Though I might mention many Advantages, I shall content myself with selecting one. Which is not only valuable in itself, but the Introduction to *every* spiritual Blessing.——When, by the Instrumentality of the Law, and the Illumination of the SPIRIT, We are brought under such Convictions; then We are taught to *see* our Danger; then We are made to *feel* our Misery: and then We shall no longer sleep in Security, but solicitously look out for Deliverance, and gladly accept the sovereign Remedy.

Ther. The Law, according to your Representation, is intended to *accuse* me——to *convict* me——to *condemn* me. So it becomes, instead of salutary, a killing System.

Asp. The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life *. If We adhere to the literal Sense, without attending to the spiritual Design: if we regard only the Precept and the Sanction; as they stand in *themselves*; and neither consider, nor improve them, as acting in *Subserviency* to the MEDIATOR's Righteousness; they are doubtless a killing Ordinance, and bind Us down under a Sentence of Death —— But rightly improved ——Hold! Let me proceed no farther with the Argument.

You are a Sportsman, *Theron*, and delight in the manly Recreations of the Field. You must therefore have read that fine Poem, which so elegantly describes your favourite Diversion

Ther. The CHACE, I suppose, You mean.

Asp. The same.—Do You remember the large Description of the *royal Stag Chace?*

Ther.

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

Ther. Perfectly well. It is not a Week, ſince I peruſed the whole Paſſage; and with as much Pleaſure, as if it had been entirely new.

Aſp. Then You can give me a Summary of the agreeable Narrative.

Ther. I can. But will not this Chace lead Us away very far from our Subject?

Aſp. Perhaps, not ſo far as You imagine. I have a Reaſon for my Requeſt.

Ther. What Reaſon, I beſeech You?

Aſp. You ſhall ſoon know, Only favour me with the Account.

Ther. I proteſt, I cannot diſcern the leaſt Connection, between thoſe rural Sports, and the grand Topic of our Converſation. However, ſince You command, I will implicitly obey.

The Stag, rouſed from his Lair, ſhakes his dappled Sides; toſſes his beamy Head; and, conſcious of ſuperior Agility, ſeems to defy the gathering Storm — You ſee, ſpeaking of Poetry, I have catched ſomething of the Poetical Strain.

Aſp. This inlivened Manner excites my Eagerneſs, and makes me more deſirous to hear the Sequel.

Ther. Firſt, He has recourſe to Stratagem, and evaſive Shifts. He plunges into the Copſe; darts acroſs the Glede; and wheels about in doubling Mazes; as though he would purſue, even the Foe He avoids. The full-mouth'd Pack unravel all his Windings, and drive Him from his wily Arts.

Now, He betakes Himſelf to Flight, and confides in his Speed. He burſts through the Woods; bounds over the Lawns; and leaves the lagging Beagles far behind. The Beagles ſlow, but ſure, trace his Steps, through Woods, through Lawns, through half the extended Foreſt. Unwearied, ſtill unwearied, they urge their ardent Way, and gain upon the alarmed Object of their Purſuit.

Again He flies. Flies with redoubled Swiftneſs, ſhoots down the Steep; ſtrains up the Hill; and takes Shelter in the inmoſt Receſs of ſome ſequeſtered Grove. The ſagacious Hounds hang, with greedy Noſtrils, on the

the Scent. They recover, by indefatigable Aſſiduity, the Ground they had loſt. Up they come a third Time; and, joining in a general Peal of Vengeance, hurry the affrighted Animal from his ſhort Concealment.

Perplexed, and in the utmoſt Diſtreſs, He ſeeks the numerous Herd. He would loſe Himſelf, and elude his Purſuers, amidſt the Multitude of his Fellows. But they, unconcerned for a Brother's Woe, ſhun the miſerable Creature, or expel him from the ſelfiſh Circle.—Abandoned by his Aſſociates, and haunted with Apprehenſions of approaching Ruin. He trembles at every Leaf that ſhakes. He ſtarts; He ſprings; and, wild, and ſwift as the Wind, flies he knows not where, yet pours all his Soul in Flight. ——Vain, vain are his Efforts. The horrid Cry, lately leſſened, thickens upon the Gale, and thunders in his Ear.—— Now, the poor breathleſs Victim is full in View. His Sprightlineſs forſakes Him. His agility is ſpent. See! how he toils in yonder Valley, with ſaultering Limbs, and a hobling Gait. The Sight of their Game, quickens the Pace, and whets the Ardour, of the impetuous Hounds. With tumultuous Violence they ruſh in, and with clamorous Joy demand their Prey.

What can He do? Surrounded as He is, with inſulting Tongues, and ravenous Jaws? Deſpair is capable of inſpiriting even the timorous Breaſt. Having nothing to hope, He forgets to fear. He faces about, and makes a reſolute Stand. The Trunk of a ſturdy Tree, covers his Rear; and his own branching Horns, defend Him in Front. He ruſhes upon his Adverſaries; gores ſome; lays others groveling on the Turf; and makes the whole coward Pack give way.

Encouraged by this unexpected Succeſs, his Hopes revive; He rallies once again his drooping Spirits; exerts the little Remainder of his Strength; and ſprings through the Midſt of the Retiring Rout ——— It is his laſt, laſt Chance. He ſtretches every Nerve; once more loſes Sight of the Rabble from the Kennel; and, finding no Security on the Land, takes to the Water. He throws his burning Sides into the River;

River; ſails down the cooling Stream; and ſlinks away to the Verge of ſome little ſhelving Iſland. Where, finding a Reſting-place for his Feet, He ſkulks cloſe to the ſhady Margin. All immerſed in the Wave, excepting only his Noſtrils, He baffles, for awhile, the prying Eye of Man, and the keener Smell of Brute.

Diſcovered, at length, and forced to quit this unavailing Refuge, He climbs the ſlippery Bank. Unable to fly any longer, He ſtands at Bay againſt an aged Willow. Stands, all faint with Toil, and ſobbing with Anguiſh. The Crouds that gather round Him, with mercileſs and outrageous Tranſport, triumph in his Miſery. A Multitude of blood-thirſty Throats, joined with the ſonorous Horn, ring his funeral Knell.——The Tears, till this fatal Inſtant unknown, guſh from his languiſhing Eyes, and roll down his reeking Cheeks. He caſts one more Look on the Woods, the Lawns, the pleaſing Scenes of his former Delights; and, determined to die, prepares to ſell his Life as dear as poſſible.

At this moſt critical Juncture, the *royal* Sportſman comes up. He ſees the diſtreſſed Creature; and, as ſoon as He ſees, He pities. The Clemency, which attends the Throne, accompanies even the Diverſions of Majeſty. He iſſues the high Command. The prohibitory Signal is given. The Pack, though raving for Blood, are checked in a Moment. And not checked only, but called off from the Prey. Diſappointed and grumbling, they retire: and leave the intended Victim of their Fury, to enjoy his Liberty, his Safety, and his Eaſe again.

I have now followed the Stag, till I have tired your Patience. Why did You ſuffer me to run on, at this extravagant Rate? You know, I am on theſe favourite Topics, an everlaſting Talker.

Aſp. Why this Apology, *Theron?* I am ſure You did not ſee my Mouth yawn, or my Head nod, while You was purſuing your Subject. Beſides, I intend to make Reprizals, and put *your* Attention to the ſame Tryal.

Thus

Thus the Strictneſs of the *Law* purſues the Soul; diſlodges it from every Refuge of Lies; and never remits its terrifying Menaces, till the poor Delinquent ceaſes from Self-confidence, and fixes on *CHRIST* for his whole Salvation *.

The Man, perhaps, is awakened into a ſerious Concern for his eternal State. In conſequence of which, He relinquiſhes his profane and iniquitous Practices. Breaks the Sabbath, and defrauds his Neighbour no more.——But the Law quickly repreſents, and in a glaring Light, that a *negative* Obedience is by no means ſufficient.

Upon this, He betakes Himſelf to a Courſe of *poſitive* Holineſs. Gets acquainted with religious People, and performs religious Duties. Prays in ſecret, and attends public Ordinances. Conſcientiouſly obſerves the LORD's Day, and regulates his Behaviour by the Rule of GOD's Commandments. Now, He is ready to congratulate Himſelf on his remarkable and hopeful Reformation.

Soon he perceives, that all his Proficiency is but Skin-deep: a mere *outſide* Varniſh: which has not penetrated the inner Man. He begins, therefore, to watch over the Motions, and bewail the Evils of his Heart. He labours to ſubdue Pride, and curb Paſſion; to purge out filthy Luſts, and to baniſh ſpiritual Wickedneſs. Notwithſtanding all his Vigilance, Conſcience flies in his Face, either for the Neglect of ſome Virtue, or the Commiſſion of ſome Sin. The Law rings in his Ear that dreadful Denunciation? "Curſed is He, "that performeth not *all* Things."

Struck by this Conviction, his Wounds bleed afreſh, He is obliged to ſeek ſome new Balm for his Sore. In

* *Lex Hominem urget, donec is ad* CHRISTUM *confugit. Tum ipſa dicit; Aſylum es nactus; deſino Te perſequi; ſapis, ſalvus es.* That is; The *Law* urges and purſues the *Sinner*, till He flies for Refuge to *JESUS CHRIST*. Then the Law ſpeaks to this Effect; "You are entered into the *Strong-hold*; my Demands are ſatiſ-"fied; my Curſes are ſilenced; I remit the Purſuit. You are "wiſe; You are ſafe; You are happy."

BENGEL.

In order to appeaſe an offended GOD, and atone for his ſinful Relapſes, He makes many ſorrowful Confeſſions; poſſibly, ſubmits to voluntary Sufferings. He denies Himſelf, and beſtows liberally on the Poor. He ſighs deeply, and mourns bitterly.——But can Waters that are muddy, cleanſe the Garment that is filthy? Wilt Thou ſatisfy, O vain Man, wilt Thou ſatisfy for one Sin, by committing another? In *theſe* penitential Exerciſes, were thy Thoughts ſteadily devout? In *thoſe* Acts of Beneficence, was thy Heart warmly affectionate? If not, ſuch fanſified Reparations of paſt Faults, only aggravate the heavy Score.

What ſhall He do? He cannot *pay*. To *beg* He is aſhamed. Fain would He enter into Life, yet not be too much indebted to Grace. He attempts therefore to *compound* with Heaven. He binds Himſelf by ſolemn, perhaps by ſacramental Engagements, to uſe greater Circumſpection for the future. Then turns his Eye to the divine MEDIATOR; not with a View of relying wholly on his Righteouſneſs; but only to obtain ſuch a Supply, as may make up the Deficiencies of his own. —— Somewhat like this was the Miſtake of the *Galatian* Converts; againſt which St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to that People, ſo ſolidly diſputes, and ſo ſharply inveighs *.

For a while, He holds faſt his purpoſed Integrity. At length, falling notoriouſly ſhort, in executing his Part, a ſtartling Voice ſounds in his Ear that dreadful Alarm; "Curſed is He that *continueth* not." His Heart ſinks with Diſcouragement, and all his Reſolutions hang their enfeebled Heads. He has tried every Method, that He can deviſe; and has found every Method ineffectual. All his Expedients are a Spider's Web, and his Hope is as the giving up of the ghoſt.

His

* *Sharply* indeed! For, inſtead of ſaluting them, under the honourable Title of *Saints, and faithful in CHRIST JESUS*; He ſtigmatizes them with that ſevere Appellation, *O fooliſh Galatians!* ——And as to their Practice, which was a Departure from Juſtification by *CHRIST alone*, He ſtyles it, not merely an Error, but an Error of the moſt miſchievous and horrid Kind——*an Infatuation*——*a Bewitchery*, Τις ἐβάσκανε. Gal. iii. 1.

His Soul, purſued by the Law, and haunted by Terror, is brought to the Gates of Death, or the very Brink of Deſpair. And now the KING of Kings, now the LORD our Righteouſneſs, appears for his Reſcue. Now is accompliſhed that gracious Declaration; *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in me is thy Help* † —— Driven from every falſe Refuge, and drawn by the bleſſed SPIRIT, He comes weary and heavy laden to *CHRIST*. Convinced of the Sin of his Nature, the Sin of his Life, and the Sin of his beſt Duties, He renounces Himſelf in every View. This is all his Salvation, and all his Deſire, that He may win *CHRIST*, and be found in Him. Did that poor afflicted Woman ſay, *If I may but touch his Garment, I ſhall be whole?* With equal Ardour does this inlightened Sinner cry; "If I may but have fellowſhip with the "glorious IMMANUEL, in his Merits and in his Be-"nefits, I am alive from the Dead; I am happy for "ever."

Having ſeen a Glimpſe of the tranſcendent Excellency of the REDEEMER's Perſon; having received a Taſte from the inexhauſtible Fulneſs of his Grace; O! how He longs for brighter Manifeſtations! How He thirſts after more plentiful Draughts! —None that come to *CHRIST*, are caſt out. He that awakens theſe ardent Deſires, in his due Time gives the deſired Bleſſings. After various Conflicts, a comfortable and eſtabliſhed Faith is wrought in the Penitent's Soul. He believes, that the SON of the MOST HIGH died in *his* Stead, and was obedient for *his* Juſtification. Believes, that all the unſearchable Riches of the adored MEDIATOR's Life and Death are his Portion *.

† Hoſ. xiii. 9.

* See this Work of Grace, and Procedure of Converſion, more copiouſly diſplayed, in a valuable little Piece, intitled, *Human Nature in its fourfold State*, by Mr. *Thomas Boſton*, page 227.—— Which, in my Opinion, is one of our beſt Books for common Readers. The Sentences are ſhort, and the Comparitons ſtriking. The Language is eaſy, and the Doctrine evangelical. The Method proper, the Plan comprehenſive, the Manner ſearching, yet conſolatory.——If another celebrated Treatiſe is ſtyled, *The whole Duty*

By this Faith, his Heart is purified; his Heart is quickened. He is fitted for every good Work.—— Though Temptations assault Him, He derives Strength from his SAVIOUR; resists the Devil; and is faithful unto Death——. Though Corruptions defile Him, he flies to the *Fountain opened for Uncleanness* *; makes daily, hourly Application of the Blood of Sprinkling; and goes on his Way, rejoicing in GOD his SAVIOUR.

Ther. Your Discourse puts me in mind of *Absalom*'s Procedure, when *Joab* refused to make him a Visit. The Prince ordered his Servants to set on fire the General's standing Corn †. This Stratagem had its intended Effect. The Apprehension of Danger *drove* Him, when the respectful Invitation would not *lead* Him, to a personal Interview. You seem to suppose, that the Law was delivered with such a Design; to lay Us under a *Necessity* of flying to the Atonement of *CHRIST*.

Asp. I do, *Theron*. And for this Opinion, I have a far better Authority, than my own Supposition. We are assured by unerring Wisdom, That *CHRIST is the End of the Law* §. It points invariably to Him. It terminates wholly in Him. And *then* obtains its first, its principal Purpose, when Sinners are brought to their Divine REDEEMER, for Righteousness and Strength: For that *Righteousness*, which intitles to Heaven: that *Strength*, which capacitates for Obedience.

The Law hath concluded all Mankind *under Sin* ‖. Yet not with an Intention, that any should be discouraged

Duty of Man, I would call this the WHOLE *of Man*: as it comprises—what he *was* originally—what He *is* by Transgression—what He *should be* through Grace—and then what He *will be* in Glory.

* Zech. xiii. 1. † 2 Sam. xiv. 30. § Rom. x. 4.

‖ *Gal* iii. 10. The sacred Original is somewhat more comprehensive than *Aspasio*'s Interpretation. It is not πάντας, but τὰ πάντα. Which denotes *Things*, as well as *Persons*: And implies, that nothing We *leave*, nothing We *do*, is free from Sin; 'till the Merits of *CHRIST* intervene, and the Blood of *CHRIST* be sprinkled.

raged now, or perish for ever: but that every One may see his inexpressible Need, of a SAVIOUR's Death, and a SAVIOUR's Obedience *. That, being thus prepared, both to value and receive so precious a Blessing, *the Promise* of justification *by Faith in JESUS CHRIST may be given to them that believe.*

Let Us advert to this grand Aim of the Law. Then, We shall see Goodness, unquestionable and sovereign Goodness in forming its Constitution so *sublimely perfect*, and making its Threatenings so *inflexibly severe.* Exclusive of this wholesome Severity, We should supinely disesteem, perhaps, wantonly reject, the Grace of the Gospel.——The *prodigal Son* would never have returned to his Father, in that humble, submissive, supplicating Posture; if He had not found his Circumstances utterly ruined, and felt Himself perishing with Hunger. No more would the conceited Sons of *Adam*, disclaiming all Pretence to any Merit

 of

* *Witsius*, speaking of the Law delivered at *Sinai* says; *Facta est ista Fœderis Operum Commemoratio, ad Israelitas Peccatorum & Miseriæ suæ convincendos, ex seipsis expellendos, de Necessitate Satisfactionis edocendos, & ad CHRISTUM compellendos: & sic inservit Fœderi Gratiæ.*

Animadv. IREN. p. 99.

The *Genius* and *Design* of the Law were, I think, emblematically taught, by the Circumstances attending its *Delivery.*—The Mountain, not to be trodden by any *Israelite*, or touched by any Beast, on pain of Death—The Voice of Thunder, and the Glare of Lightening—The Sound of the Trumpet, and the Clouds of Smoke—The vast Range of Hills and Rocks, trembling to their Center—Six hundred thousand Men struck with inexpressible Consternation——And *Moses*, even *Moses* himself, the Favourite of Heaven, terrified exceedingly—All these indicated the *righteous*, the *rigorous*, and the *awful* Import of "The Word spoken."

Nor was the *Effect* of these astonishing Incidents, without a spiritual Meaning. The People durst not adventure upon a *personal* Approach, but had recourse to a *Mediator.* They requested, that *Moses* might interpose; and transact Affairs, between the terrible JEHOVAH, and the guilty Congregation.—Such an Impression, the Purity and the Rigour of the Law, should make on our Hearts: should drive Us from Self to a SAVIOUR; deter Us from confiding in our *legal*, and prompt Us to seek an *evangelical* Righteousness.

of their own, and with nothing but the Halter ¶ of Self-condemnation about their Necks, fall down at the Feet of a merciful REDEEMER: if they were not inſtigated by the ſharp Goad, or rather driven by the flaming Sword of the Law.

Ther. Has the Law then nothing to do with our Temper and Converſation? Is it no longer to be conſidered as a Syſtem of Duties? No longer to be regarded as a Rule of Life?

Aſp. When it has forced the Lines of Self-righteouſneſs, and driven Us to *JESUS CHRIST*, that only Citadel of Safety, for Acceptance and Salvation; *then* it ſerves as a Rule for our Conduct. *Then* it ſhews Us, like a Friend and a Guide, how to order our Converſation, and adorn our Profeſſion; how to glorify GOD, and expreſs our Gratitude to *CHRIST*. But, till it has accompliſhed the fore-mentioned End, it thunders Vengeance; it flaſhes Terror; it is, as *Moſes* ſpeaks, *a fiery Law* *.

And is it, my dear *Theron*, a fiery Law? Then let it conſtrain Us to take ſhelter in that meritorious Obedience, which will be to our guilty Souls *as the Cold of Snow in the Time of Harveſt* †.—Is it a Law, which *worketh Wrath?* Let it endear to our Affections that ineſtimably precious Goſpel, which *preacheth Peace by JESUS CHRIST* ‡.—Is it *the Miniſtration of Condemnation* ‖?——O! let it quicken our Flight to that All-gracious SURETY, who was condemned at *Pilate's* Bar, that we may be acquitted at GOD's Tribunal.

To

¶ Alluding to thoſe remarkable Words of *Benhadad's* Servants; *Let Us put Sackcloth upon our Loins*, and Ropes upon our Heads, *and go out to meet the King of Iſrael; peradventure He will ſave thy Life*, 1 Kings xx. 31.

* *Fiery Law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. I dare not affirm, that this is the exact Import of the Original, nor do I preſume to determine the precite Signification of a Phraſe, ſo remarkably difficult. But as this is our received Verſion; as it ſuggeſts a very *uſeful* Truth; and a Truth, which, in the preſent Age, is peculiarly *needful* to be inculcated; I am inclined to acquieſce in the common Rendering.

† Prov. xxv. 13. ‡ Acts x. 36. ‖ 2 Cor. iii. 19.

To all this agrees our celebrated *Milton*. Whose Divinity is as faultless, as his Poetry is matchless. You will give me Leave to quote a few of his beautiful Lines. Which *recapitulate*, as it were, the whole preceding Conversation: and, while they recapitulate the Conversation, *confirm* the Doctrine. This will make you some amends, for my late tedious Harangue. This will tip the Lead with Gold.

So Law appears imperfect; and but giv'n
With Purpose to resign them, in full Time,
Up to a better Cov'nant; disciplin'd
From shadowy Types to Truth; from Flesh to Spirit;
From Imposition of strict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace; from servile fear,
To final; Works of Law, to Works of Faith *.

DIALOGUE X.

ASPASIO.

AGain, *Theron!* Must we never lay aside the Weapons of Controversy?——You put me in mind of the resolute *Athenian*; who, having fought with distinguished Bravery on the Field of *Marathon*, pursued the vanquished *Persians* to their Fleet. At that very Instant, a Galley full of the Enemies Troops, was putting off to Sea. Determined, if possible, to prevent their Escape, He laid hold on the Vessel with his Right-hand. Which was no sooner fixed, than chopped by the Sailors. The Warrior, not at all discouraged, seized it with his Left. When that also was cut away, He fastened his Teeth in its Side: and never quitted his Gripe, till he resigned his Breath †.

* Book XII. 300.

† The *Athenian*'s Name was *Cynægyrus*. The Author, who relates this extraordinary Story, is *Justin*. If the Reader should think

Ther. I have been reconsidering the Case of *imputed Righteousness*, and am by no Means satisfied, as to the Propriety of the Phrase, or the Truth of the Doctrine; especially, in the Sense which You espouse.—Objections arise, more substantial and weighty, than any that have hitherto been urged. And which, if I mistake not, You will find it a more difficult Task to answer.

Asp. I must do my best. And if my best Attempts prove unsuccessful, I shall say with the gallant *Iphicrates*, when overpowered by the Eloquence of his Antagonist; "My Adversary is the better Actor, but "mine is the better Play."

I say *better*—For, to You, *Theron*, I will freely own, what to another Person I should not be so willing to disclose; That I receive no Comfort, but from the habitual Belief, and daily Application of this precious Doctrine.—Whenever I read the most *correct* and *beautiful* Writings, that proceed in the contrary Strain, I feel my Spirits heavy; I find my Prospects gloomy; and not one Ray of Consolation gleams upon my Mind. Whereas, *much meaner* Compositions, which breathe the Savour of this evangelical Unction, seldom fail to quicken my Hopes; to brighten my Views; and put into my Mouth that piously alert Profession of the Psalmist, *I will run the Way of thy Commandments, now thou hast set my Heart at liberty* *.—— Though I am far from laying any considerable Stress upon this Observation; farther still from advancing it into the Place of an Argument; yet I may be permitted to mention it, in the Confidence and Familiarity of Friendship.

Ther. An Opinion proposed with so much Modesty, and so nearly connected with my *Aspasio*'s Comfort, has doubtless a Claim to my serious Attention. Otherwise, it might possibly provoke my Raillery. For, You must know, I am no great Admirer of inward Feelings. I cannot think them a very solid Method of demon-

think it a *Rhodomontade*, I believe, He will not judge amiss. And I promise myself, the same good Sense will enable him to distinguish, between what is *hinted* by way of *Pleasantry*, and what is *urged* by way of *Argument*.

* Psal. cxix. 32.

demonſtrating your Point. It muſt be inforced by better Reaſons, if you would gain it Acceſs to *my* Heart.

We muſt place, You ſay, a Dependence upon the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in all that He has *done* and *ſuffered*. What HE has done and ſuffered, You add, is our only juſtifying Righteouſneſs: and, to place our Dependence on it, is the only Method to obtain Pardon of our Sins, and Life eternal.

Aſp. I have ſaid it, *Theron*, and I abide by it. This being the Righteouſneſs of GOD, is—

Ther. Give me Leave, before You proceed farther, to propoſe a Query. Does the Righteouſneſs of GOD ſignify the active and paſſive Obedience of *CHRIST*?

Aſp. Righteouſneſs is a Conformity to the Law, in Heart, and in Life. As the SON of GOD voluntarily made Himſelf ſubject to the Law; perfectly fulfilled its Precepts; and ſuffered to the utmoſt its Penalty; this, I ſhould imagine, furniſhes Us with the *trueſt* and *nobleſt* Signification of the Phraſe.

Ther. What, if I or others ſhould imagine quite the Reverſe?

Aſp. I thank my Friend for his Admonition. It is indeed unreaſonable, that *my bare* Imagination ſhould paſs for Orthodoxy and Truth. Let Us then inquire after better Proof.

When the divine Name, in the ſacred Phraſeology, is added to a Subſtantive, it expreſſes ſome very extraordinary Property.—*The Trees of the LORD**, denote thoſe ſtately and magnificent Foreſts, which the Hand of the MOST HIGH planted.—*The Mountains of GOD*†, are thoſe prodigiouſly large Elevations of the Earth, which none but an Almighty Arm could eſtabliſh.—The Righteouſneſs of GOD likewiſe means, A Righteouſneſs of the *moſt ſupereminent* Dignity; ſuch as is worthy to be called by his

* Pſal. civ. 16.

† This is the Import of the Original, הרי אלהים, *Pſal.* xxxvi. *ver.* 7. *Heb.* ver. 6. *Eng.*

Name; and may justly challenge his Acceptance. And where shall We find this, but in the Conduct and Person of his blessed SON?—This has a most unexceptionable Claim to the exalted Title: being, as a masterly Critic explains the Phrase, "A Righteousness devised by GOD the FATHER, from all "Eternity wrought out by GOD the SON, "in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST*; applied by "GOD the HOLY GHOST, to the Sinner's "Soul."

Ther. This Doctrine of yours, if I rightly understand it, would make Remission of Sins but one *half* of our Justification; and something else necessary, in order to obtain eternal Life. Which is just as rational, as to suppose, That though one Cause may expel Darkness, another must supervene, in order to introduce Light.

Asp. The Nature of Justification, and the Nature of Condemnation, are two *Opposites*, which will mutually illustrate each other.—What is implied in the Condemnation of a Sinner; He forfeits eternal Life, and is doomed to eternal Death.—What is included in the Justification of a Sinner? It supersedes his Obligation to Punishment, and invests Him with a Title to Happiness.—In order to the *first*, there must be a Remission of Sins. In order to the *second*, an Imputation of Righteousness. *Both* which are derived from *CHRIST*'s Mediation in our Behalf; and *both* take place, when we are united to that Divine HEAD.—So that We do not derive them from two different Sources, but ascribe them to one and the same great All-sufficient CAUSE.

Your Comparison, though intended to overthrow, I think, fully establishes the Sentiment.—When yonder bright Orb makes his first Appearance in the East, what Effects are produced: The Shades of Night are dispersed and the Light of Day is diffused.—To what are they owing? Each to a separate, or both to the same Origin? Every one's Experience will answer the Question. Thus, when the *Sun of Righteousness* arises in the Soul, He brings *at once* Pardon and Acceptance.

tance. Remiſſion and Salvation are under his Wings. Both which conſtitute the *Healing* * of the Nations: and both owe their Being to *CHRIST*'s Obedience, embraced as active, and not rejected as paſſive.

Ther. This, I know, is the fine-ſpun Theory of your ſyſtematic Divines. But where is their *Warrant* from Scripture? By what Authority do they introduce ſuch ſubtle Diſtinctions?

Aſp. I cannot think the Diſtinction ſo ſubtle, or the Theory ſo finely-ſpun. To be releaſed from the *damnatory* Sentence, is one Thing; to be treated as a *righteous* Perſon, is evidently another. — *Abſalom* was pardoned, when He received a Permiſſion to remove from *Geſhur*, and dwell at *Jeruſalem*. But this was very different from the Recommencement of filial Duty, and parental Endearment †. A Rebel may be *exempted* from the capital Puniſhment, which his traiterous Practices deſerve; without being *reſtored* to the Dignity of his former State, or the Rights of a loyal Subject. In *Chriſtianity* likewiſe, to be freed from the Charge of Guilt, and to be regarded as a righteous Perſon, are two ſeveral Bleſſings; really diſtinct in themſelves, and often diſtinguiſhed in Scripture.

Ther. Where are they diſtinguiſhed? In what Texts of Scripture? This is what I called for—your ſcriptural Warrant.

Aſp. What think You of *Job*'s Reply to his cenſorious Friends? *GOD forbid, that I ſhould juſtify You!* That He *forgave* them, there is no Doubt. Yet He could not *juſtify* them: could not allow their Reflections to be equitable, or their Behaviour charitable.

What think You of *Solomon*'s Supplication? *Then hear Thou in Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants; condemning the Wicked, to bring his Way upon his Head; and juſtifying the Righteous, to give Him according to his Righteouſneſs* §. To condemn, in this Paſſage, evident-

* Mal. iv. 2. † 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

‡ *Job* xxvii. 5. *Vos juſtos in Cauſâ veſtrâ adverſus me pronuntiem.* SCHULT.

§ 1 Kings viii. 32.

ly signifies to pronounce guilty, and obnoxious to Punishment. By Parity of Reason, to *justify* must denote to pronounce righteous, and intitled to Happiness.

What says *Solomon*'s Father! *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD! For, in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified* *. A Man might be *pardoned*, if judged according to the Tenour of his own Obedience. But no Man could be *declared righteous*, in consequence of such a Trial: this were absolutely and universally impossible.

From all which Passages I conclude, That to be justified, is different from, is superior to, the bare Remission of Sin.

Ther. All these Instances are derived from the *Old* Testament: the *New*, if I mistake not, speaks another Language. Consider the Case of the penitent *Publican*. What does He request? *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner!* What does He obtain? *He went down to his House justified* †. If then the Petition and the Grant may be deemed correspondent, Pardon and Justification must be reckoned equivalent.

Asp. The Old and the New Testament are, in their Style and Contents, exactly correspondent. *Echo*, in yonder Cloysters, does not more punctually reverberate the Speaker's Voice, than those divine Books harmonize with each other.

Yet it will not follow, from the *Publican*'s Request and the *Publican*'s Blessing, That Pardon and Justification are the same. Only, that GOD's Bounty frequently exceeds our Prayers, and is larger than our Expectations; or that the Blessing which was implored, and the Blessing which was vouchsafed, are *inseparately* connected, and always accompany each other.

St. *Paul* mentions, *A Justification of Life:* not barely an Exemption from the Sentence of Death; but such a Justification, as gives *a Title* ‡ to the Reward of Life.

* Psal. cxliii. 2. † Luke xviii. 13, 14.

‡ *Rom* v. 18. Δικαίωσις ζωῆς *est Declaratio divina, illa qua Peccator Mortis reus,* Vitæ *adjudicatur, idque* jure.

BENGEL. in loc.

Life. The Words are emphatical. We ſhall injure the Dignity of their Meaning, if We underſtand them in a more contracted Senſe.—Towards the Cloſe of the ſame Chapter, We have another Paſſage, rich with Conſolation, and full to our Purpoſe. *Grace reigneth through Righteouſneſs unto eternal Life* †: Here, is pointed out the *prime Source* of all our Bleſſings, infinitely free and triumphant Grace; The *meritorious Cauſe*, not any Works of Man, not any Qualifications of our own, but the perfect Righteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST:* The *Effect* or *End* of all; which is, not barely an Abſolution from Guilt, but an Inſtatement in Life; a Life of holy Communion with GOD in this World, to be crowned with an eternal Fruition of Him in another ‡.

Let me produce one Text more, which juſt at this Inſtant occurs to my Memory. You will find it in the Apoſtle's Defence of Himſelf, before *Feſtus* and *Agrippa*. He opens, as it were, his apoſtolical Commiſſion, and repeats the Words of his royal MASTER. *I ſend thee* to ignorant and inſlaved, guilty and ruined Creatures; *to turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto GOD; that they may receive Forgiveneſs of Sins, and Inheritance among all them which are ſanctified by Faith that is in me* §. The great PREACHER of the *Gentiles*, or rather the Supreme LORD of all Preachers, has diſtinguiſhed between *Remiſſion of Sins*, and the *Inheritance of Saints*; between the *Pardon* that delivers from Hell, and the *Juſtification* that intitles to Heaven. So that the former does by no Means conſtitute the latter; but is connected with it, as a Link in the ſame ſacred Chain; or included in it, as Part of the ſame glorious Whole.

Ther.

† Rom. v. 21.

‡ Accordingly, eternal Life is called *The Hope*, not of Forgiveneſs, but *of Righteouſneſs*, Gal. v. 5. And it is beſtowed, not barely becauſe of Abſolution, but *becauſe of Righteouſneſs*, Rom. viii. 10.

§ Acts xxvi. 18.

Ther. Admitting Your Diſtinction to be proper; Is not the Satisfaction, made by the Death of *CHRIST*, ſufficient of *itſelf* to obtain, both our full Pardon, and our final Happineſs?

Aſp. Since my Friend has ſtarted the Queſtion, I may venture, with all Reverence to the divine Counſels, to anſwer in the Negative: it being neceſſary, that the REDEEMER of Men ſhould *obey*, as well as *ſuffer*, in their Stead.—For this We have the Teſtimony of our LORD Himſelf, *This Commandment*, ſays He, *have I received of my FATHER, that I ſhould lay down my Life* †. *Thus it becometh Us*, adds He in another Place, *to fulfill all Righteouſneſs* ‡. To which his Apoſtle ſubjoins; that, if We *reign in Life*, it muſt be, not only through thoſe Sufferings which expiate, but alſo *through* that *Righteouſneſs* ‖ which merits.

Ther. Our LORD's Teſtimony relates only to a *poſitive* Inſtitution, and is quite foreign to your Purpoſe. — I have often been diſguſted at ſuch ſtrained Applications of Scripture. The Partizans of a Syſtem wreſt the ſacred Book. They deal with divine Truth, as the Tyrant *Procruſtes* ſerved thoſe unhappy Creatures, who fell into his mercileſs Hands. Is a Text too ſhort, to ſuit their Deſign? Our *Procruſtean* Expoſitors can ſtretch it on the Rack, and lengthen its Senſe. Is it too full, to conſiſt with their Scheme? They can lop off a Limb, ſecrete a Sentence, or contract the Meaning. — Is this to reverence the great GOD? Is this to treat reſpectfully his holy Word?

Aſp. I have been grieved, I aſſure You, and diſguſted at this Practice, as well as Yourſelf. A Practice, not only very irreverent, but very injudicious alſo. It really prejudices the Cauſe, it would unfairly recommend. Such a Support is like a *broken Tooth, or a Foot out of joint* *; not only unſerviceable, but hurtful; an Obſtruction, rather than a Furtherance. —— However, I am not conſcious of committing any Violence

† John x. 18. ‡ Matth. iii. 15. ‖ Rom. v. 17.
* Prov. xxv. 19.

lence on this Paſſage, or of forcing it into my Service. The Circumſtance You object, rather ſtrengthens, than invalidates the Concluſion. If it was ſo requiſite for our bleſſed MEDIATOR, to obſerve a *poſitive* Inſtitution; how much more neceſſary, to fulfil thoſe *moral* Precepts, whoſe Obligation is unalterable and everlaſting.

Beſides; it ſhould be conſidered, Whether *CHRIST*'s Sufferings were a complete Satisfaction to the Law? Complete they were, with regard to the *Penalty*, not with regard to the *Precept*. A Diſtinction obvious and important. From whence ariſes the following Argument; which, for once, You will allow me to propoſe in the *logical* Form.

By what alone the Law was not ſatisfied; by that alone Sinners could not be juſtified:

By *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, the Law was not ſatisfied:

Therefore, by *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, Sinners could not be juſtified.

But when We join the active with the paſſive Obedience of our LORD; the Efficacy of the One, with the Perfection of the Other; how does our Juſtification ſtand firm, in the *fulleſt* Senſe of the Word! We have *all* that the Law demands, both for our Exemption from the Curſe, and as a Title to the Bleſſing.

Ther. Does not the Scripture aſcribe the *Whole* of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*? Delivering it, as a never-to-be-forgotten Maxim in Chriſtianity; That *We have Redemption through his Blood* *: *are brought near through the Blood of CHRIST* †: nay, that *We are juſtified* (the very Point under Debate) *through his Blood* ‡.——Would the inſpired Writer have aſſigned theſe various Bleſſings to this *one* Cauſe; if it had been a Price inadequate to the Purchaſe, or a Means inſufficient to accompliſh the End?

Aſp. This *Part* of our LORD's meritorious Humiliation, is, by a very uſual Figure, put for the *Whole*. The

* Eph. i. 7. † Eph. ii. 13. ‡ Rom. v. 9.

The Death of *CHRIST* includes, not only his Sufferings, but his Obedience. The Shedding of his precious Blood, was at once the grand Inſtance of his Suffering, and the finiſhing Act of his Obedience. In this View it is conſidered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own Ambaſſador. Who, ſpeaking of his Divine MASTER, ſays, *He was* obedient *unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs* *.

By the ſame Figure, Faith is ſometimes ſaid to be a lively influential Perſuaſion, *That CHRIST died for our Sins* †. At other Times, it is repreſented as a firm practical Belief, That *GOD hath raiſed him from the Dead* §. Neither of which can, without the utmoſt Contrariety to the Analogy of Scripture, be taken in the *excluſive* Senſe. Each Act muſt be underſtood, not ſeparately, but jointly. Each as implying both, or reciprocally inferring one another.

In like manner, when the Scripture aſcribes our Juſtification to the Death of *CHRIST*; We are not to think, that it would *ſet aſide*, but *imply* his Obedience. It is not becauſe his active Obedience has no Concern, in procuring the Bleſſing; but becauſe his bitter Paſſion was the moſt conſpicuous, and the completing Stage of his ever-glorious Undertaking. Then, and not till then, He could truly ſay; *FATHER, I have finiſhed the Work, Thou gaveſt me to do* ‡.

Ther. According to your Account then, it ſhould be poſſible for a Man to have all his Sins done away, yet not attain to *comtlete* Juſtification. Which is as contrary to ſound Senſe, and true Divinity, as to imagine, that Crookedneſs may be removed, and the Object not become ſtraight.

Aſp. No *Theron*. According to my Account, it is impoſſible, that the active and paſſive Obedience of our REDEEMER ſhould be diſjoined. To whomſoever the one is imputed, from Him the other is not with-held. They were *undivided in CHRIST* the illuſtrious Head, and they are *undivided* in their Appli-

* Phil. ii. 8.
† 1 Cor. xv. 3.
§ Rom. x. 9.
‡ John xvii. 4.

Application to his myſtical Body. As *CHRIST* in ſuffering obeyed, and in obeying ſuffered; ſo, whoever receives *CHRIST* as an Atonement, receives Him alſo as a Righteouſneſs.

This has been obſerved before; and if this be real Fact, what an *ineſtimable precious* Gift, is the Gift of *CHRIST!* Never was the moſt ſovereign Remedy, ſo admirably ſuited to any Malady, as this is adapted to all our Wants. In HIM may We be found, living and dying! How ſafe, how happy then!—Let me not weary your Patience, if I repeat a Paſſage from our excellent Dr. *Lightfoot*. Which, though artleſs and remarkably ſimple, has very much affected my Mind; and, I hope, will leave ſome valuable Impreſſion on my Friend's. "Juſtification, ſays that judicious Divine, "is a Man's being intereſted in all *CHRIST*'s Righte-"ouſneſs. And if any Thing is to be longed for, "ſure that is, to be intereſted in *all CHRIST*'s Righ-"teouſneſs."

Ther. You don't weary my Patience; neither do You ſatisfy my Doubts. For You take no notice of the *Abſurdity* objected, and the Compariſon that inforces it.

Aſp. Your Compariſon, my dear Friend, is not founded on a *parallel* Caſe. Neither Senſe, nor Philoſophy find a Medium, between the Removal of Crookedneſs, and the Succeſſion of Straightneſs. But Reaſon diſcerns an *apparent*, and Revelation maintains an *important* Difference, between the Pardon of Guilt, and a Title to Life. This has already been proved from Scripture; and is, to me at leaſt, evident from the very Nature of Things. For, if a King, in favour of ſome condemned Maleſactor, revoke the Sentence of Death; this is one very conſiderable Act of Clemency. But if He pleaſes to make the pardoned Criminal, a *Partaker* of his Kingdom, or an Heir of his Crown: This ſurely is a new, and a much higher Inſtance of royal Bounty.

If You inſiſt upon a *Similitude*, the Word of GOD, which always ſpeaks with conſummate Propriety, will furniſh Us with one. *Zechariah* illuſtrates the Doctrine

trine of Juſtification. He repreſents the Sinner by a Perſon arrayed in *filthy Garments*. His Pardon is deſcribed by *taking away* this ſordid Apparel. By which Benefit, He ceaſes to be defiled; yet is He not hereby clothed; yet is He not hereby juſtified. This is an additional Bleſſing; ſignified by putting on *Change of Raiment* *, and wearing beautiful Robes. —— Here, the Circumſtances tally. The two conſtituent Parts of Juſtification, are ſeverally diſplayed, and ſtrongly marked. Here We have the Removal of Filth, and the Robe of Righteouſneſs; that which ſrees Us from being abhorred, and that which renders Us accepted. Which, though diſtinguiſhable in themſelves, and diſtinguiſhed by the ſacred Writer, are always united in the divine Donation.

Ther. This Notion is founded on a *chimerical* Covenant, that *CHRIST* would take upon Him the Obedience due from Man, of which there is not the leaſt Intimation in holy Scripture.

Aſp. That *CHRIST* undertook every Thing neceſſary, to redeem *loſt Sinners* from Guilt and Condemnation; every Thing neceſſary, to procure for *attainted Rebels* a freſh Title to Life and Glory; this cannot be reckoned chimerical. This muſt be as real, as that loſt Sinners are redeemed, or attainted Rebels reſtored. Every Proof of the one, proves and eſtablithes the other. This is what We call a *Covenant*; and, from its benign Nature, THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Without *undertaking* this, I ſee not how our LORD could ſuſtain the Character of a SURETY; nor, without *fulfilling* it, how He could execute the Office of a REDEEMER. —— And I believe, You yourſelf will be at a loſs to ſhew, with what Kind of Juſtice the Eternal FATHER could *lay* † our Iniquities on the innocent *JESUS*, unleſs He had *conſented* to be anſwerable for our Guilt.

Ther. This is no anſwer to my Objection. I ſaid ——and it has been aſſerted by a very eminent and able

* Zech. iii. 3, 4, 5. † Iſa. liii. 6.

ble Pen—that there is no Intimation of any ſuch Covenant in the whole Scriptures.

Aſp. What then can be the Meaning of thoſe remarkable Words, in the Prophecy of *Zechariah*? *The Counſel of Peace ſhall be between them both* *. Here, I think, the Covenant is mentioned, and the Parties are ſpecified. ——*The Counſel of Peace*, if I miſtake not, ſignifies the myſterious and unſearchable Contrivance, formed for the Recovery of ruined Man.—Formed and carried into Execution by the LORD Almighty or GOD the FATHER; and that illuſtrious Perſon, who is to *build the Temple, and bear the Glory*. A Character, which None can claim; a Talk, to which None is equal; but the bleſſed *JESUS* only.

In

* *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. Theſe two Verſes contain a brief, but very fine Deſcription of the REDEEMER; of his Perſon, his Office, and his Glory; together with the all gracious Cauſe, and everbleſſed Fruit of our Redemption.

His *Perſon*: He is *the Man*; or, as the *Hebrew* imports, the *real*, but at the ſame Time, the *illuſtrious* Man.——*Whoſe Name is the BRANCH*; being the new Origin of a new Race; the Father of a ſpiritual Seed, who are Children, not of the Fleſh, but of the Promiſe.——A Branch that ſhall ſpring, not from a common Root, not from any human Planting, but מִתַּחְתָּיו *from under Himſelf*; being born of a pure Virgin, and by the Power of his own SPIRIT, He ſhall be both Stock and Stem to Himſelf.

His *Office*: It is to *build the Temple*, the Church of the Elect; which is the Houſe of the living GOD. In which he dwells, and by whom He is worſhipped. Laying the Foundation of this ſpiritual Edifice in his Croſs, and Cementing it with his Blood.—— Which He ſhall rule as a *King*, after having redeemed it as a *Prieſt*; uniting the ſacerdotal Cenſer with the regal Diadem, and being a *Prieſt upon his Throne*. Hence proceeds his *Glory*: For, he *ſtands* not, like other Prieſts, offering daily the ſame Oblations; but having, by one Sacrifice, obtained eternal Redemption for Us, is *ſet* down at the Right-hand of the MAJESTY on High.

What is the *Cauſe* of theſe great Events? What, but that moſt ſacred and auguſt Convention, *the Council of Peace*? Which was ſettled *between them both*; between the LORD JEHOVAH on one Hand, and the Man whoſe Name is the *BRANCH* on the other.——Called a *Council*, from the intire Conſent, which actuated each Party; and the tranſcendent Wiſdom, diſplayed in the whole Scheme.——The Council of *Peace*, becauſe of its ſovereign Efficacy, to make Peace with an offended GOD, Peace in the accuſing Conſcience, Peace among People of jarring Tempers and diſcordant Principles.

In *Pſalm* the xlth, the *Conditions* of the Covenant are circumſtantially recorded: Which were the Incarnation and Obedience of the eternal SON: *A Body haſt thou prepared me. Lo! I come to do thy Will**. —— The *Accompliſhment* of theſe Conditions, is alledged and pleaded by our great MEDIATOR, in the Introduction to his laſt ſolemn Prayer †. What He implores, in the Proceſs of his Supplications, may be looked upon as the *Recompence* ‡, decreed Him by the FATHER, and ſtipulated in this magnificent Treaty. *Implores*, did I ſay? 'Tis very obſervable, that our LORD makes a *Demand*, rather than a *Requeſt*. The Expreſſion is not ερωτω, but θελω ‖: A Word of Authority, not of Supplication. He claims what, by the FATHER's Engagement, and by his own Obedience, was become his unqueſtionable Right.

Here are the Parties of the Covenant; the Conditions of the Covenant; the Performance of the Covenant; and the Reward, which, by virtue of ſuch Performance, is merited, is claimable, is due. All this, I ſhould imagine, amounts to an *Intimation*, and ſomewhat *more* than an Intimation of the Covenant.

Ther. This you call the Covenant of Grace: But if We are juſtified by *CHRIST*'s fulfilling of the Law, We are juſtified by Works. So that, before You can ſtrike out ſuch a Way of Salvation, You muſt *contradict* Yourſelf: And, what is more adventurous, You muſt aboliſh that fundamental Principle of the Goſpel; *By the Works of the Law, ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified.*

Aſp. We *are*, I grant it, juſtified by Works. But whoſe? The Works of *CHRIST*, not our own.—— This is very far from contradicting Ourſelves; equally far is it from aboliſhing, what you call the *Goſpel principle*. Which, though an undeniable Truth, is not an evangelical Doctrine. Becauſe it only ſhews Us our mi-

* Heb. x. 5, 7. † John xvii.

‡ This Recompence is ſpecified and promiſed, in another authentic Copy of the ſame grand Treaty, recorded, *Iſai.* xiix. 1—6

‖ Not I *beg*, but I *will*. John xvii. 24. *Sic volo, ſic jubeo.*

miſerable State, and the utter Impoſſibility of relieving Ourſelves. Whereas, nothing is *genuine* Goſpel, but what ſpeaks Comfort, and adminiſters Recovery.

Between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this, I apprehend, is the Difference: By the former, Man was indiſpenſibly bound to obey, in his *own Perſon*. By the latter, the Obedience of *his Surety* is accepted, inſtead of his own. The Righteouſneſs required by both, is not *ſincere*, but *complete*; not proportioned to the Abilities of fallen Man, but to the Purity of the Law, and the Majeſty of the LAW-GIVER.—By this means, the Glory of GOD as an awful Sovereign, and the Glory of his Law as an inviolable Syſtem, are intirely preſerved and illuſtriouſly diſplayed. The Salvation of Sinners, neither claſhes with the Truth, nor interferes with the Juſtice of the Supreme LEGISLATOR. On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *juſt* * Procedure of the moſt High GOD, to juſtify *Him that believeth on JESUS*.

Ther. When You make this Difference between the two Covenants, where is your Authority from Scripture? Which of the ſacred Writers have taught Us, that, though one demanded perſonal, the other is content with *vicarious* Obedience?

Aſp. Which?— *The firſt Three*. The moſt eminent Hiſtorian; the moſt inraptured Poet; and the moſt zealous Preacher. I need not inform You, that I mean *Moſes*, *David*, and *Paul*.

The Teſtimony of *David* has been already recited. —*Moſes* gives Us a conciſe, but very inſtructive Account of the ſecond Covenant. With *Whom*, according to his Repreſentation, was it made? Not with *Adam*, or any of his Poſterity; but with the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in the Room and Stead of both. None of the Articles are propoſed to a poor, impotent, ruined Creature; but the whole is conſigned over to the interpoſing SAVIOUR, ſignificantly deſcribed by *the Seed of the Woman*. It is not ſaid, "Thy beſt "Endeavours,

* 1 John. i. 9.

" Endeavours, O *Adam*, thy true Repentance and " ſincere Obedience, ſhall retrieve this fatal Miſcar- " riage; but, *the Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the* " *Serpent's Head* *: the SON of the MOST HIGH, " by taking thy Nature, ſubmitting to thy Obligations, " and ſuffering Death for thy Sins, ſhall fully repair " thy Loſs."

CHRIST We ſee, undertook to execute the Conditions. *CHRIST* was our Repreſentative in this great Tranſaction. For which Reaſon He is ſtyled by St. *Paul*, *The ſecond Man* †, and *the Surety of a better Covenant* ‡.—— Our Help being laid upon ONE, that is ſo mighty; upon ONE, that is ſo faithful; the Covenant is ſaid to be, *In all Things well ordered and ſure* §. Admirably well ordered indeed, for the Comfort of the *Chriſtian*, and the Security of his Salvation.—" 'Tis true, may He argue, I cannot fulfil " the Conditions; and 'tis equally true, that this is " not required at my Hands. The *LORD JESUS* " *CHRIST*, of his adorably rich Goodneſs, has performed " all that was conditionary ‖; and has eſtabliſhed, for " me and for his People, a *valid Title* to the Promiſes, " the Privileges, and—

Ther. " Has thereby releaſed me from all Obligation " to Duty." — Farewel then to our own Obedience. No more Occaſion for any Holineſs of Life. Nay; the Sluice, is opened for an Inundation of Ungodlineſs. ——Fine Divinity truly! Should I not rather ſay? Downright *Antinomianiſm!*

Aſp.

* Gen. iii. 15. † Cor. xv. 48.

‡ Heb. vii. 22. § 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

‖ *Witſius*, inſtead of repreſenting the *Covenant of Grace* as a *chimerical* Thing, moſt affectionately and charmingly diſplays its Excellency; *Si quicquam ergo attentiſſima Conſideratione dignum cenſeri debeat, ſane id Fœdus Gratiæ eſt. Hic Via oſtenditur ad meliorem terreſtri Paradiſum, & ad certiorem ſtabiliioremque Fœlicitatem eâ qua Adamus excidit. Hic nova Spes perditis Mortalibus alluceat, quæ eo gratior eſſe debet, quo inexſpectatior obvenit. Hic conditiones offeruntur, quibus æterna Salus annexa eſt; Conditiones non a Nobis rurſus præſtandæ, quod Animum deſpondere faceret; ſed ab EO, qui Vitâ non excedit, antequam vere dixerit*, Conſummatum eſt.

De Oecon. Lib. II. Cap. i.

Asp. No my Friend: CHRIST *came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil* * He has fulfilled it, to the very uttermost, in his own Person. He has also merited for Us, those Supplies of the SPIRIT, which alone can enable weak corrupt Creatures, to yield faithful and acceptable Obedience.—Though our *LORD JESUS died*, and was obedient *for the Ungodly*; though He *finds* Us ungodly, when He justifies Us; yet He never leaves his People in this abominable State. On the contrary, He *teaches them to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts* †.

Pray, let us consider the Tenour of this Covenant; since you are so very apprehensive of its Consequences. —"*I will put my Laws into their Minds, and on their* " *Hearts will I write them* ‡. They shall discern such " a Beauty and Glory in my Precepts, as will engage " their Desires, and win their Affections. So that " it shall be no longer their *Burden*, but their *Delight*, " even their Meat and Drink, to do the Will of their " FATHER in Heaven."—This, this is one of the Privileges, purchased by our great MEDIATOR. And it seems wondrous strange that the purchase of an Estate for You or me, should be reckoned the sure Means, to *deprive* Us of the Possession, or *debar* Us from the Enjoyment.

How often is this *weak Surmise* urged as an Argument? All whose Plausibility is owing, to a palpable Mistake, or an egregious Fallacy: to a supposed Separation of Things, which are absolutely inseparable; I mean, our Justification and our Sanctification § —You are a Philosopher, *Theron*, Try, if You can separate *Gravity* from the Stone, or Heat from the Fire. If these Bodies and their essential Properties, are indissolubly connected; so are a genuine Faith, and a conscientious Obedience. To suppose them disunited, is as contrary to *sound Divinity*, as it would be contrary to *true Philosophy*, if you should

* Matt. v. 17. † John i. 16. ‡ Heb. viii. 10, 11.

§ See *Isai.* xlv. 24 1 *Cor.* i. 30. 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. Where these Blessings walk Hand in Hand; and never *were*, never *will*, never *can* be parted.

ſhould talk of a burning Subſtance that has no Warmth, or of a ſolid Subſtance that has no Weight.——Never therefore, my dear Friend, repeat this ſtale Objection; never propagate this *ungrounded* Clamour; nor adopt a Cavil, which is altogether as unphiloſophical †, as it is anti-evangelical.

Ther. We digreſs from the Point. My principal Objection is not ſatisfied. I was obſerving that according to *your* Manner of ſtating the Affair, Salvation is no longer free, but founded upon Works.—They are the Works of the Law, though *CHRIST* performs them. To maintain, that We are juſtified by theſe Works, is to confound the Difference between the Law, and the Goſpel.

Aſp. Though We ſhould admit your Premiſes, We cannot acquieſce in your Concluſion. The ſame Righteouſneſs, by which We are juſtified, is both legal and evangelical. *Legal* in reſpect to *CHRIST* who was made under the Law, that He might obey all

† This puts me in mind of what *Theoderus* replied to *Philocles*; who was often inſinuating, that He preached *licentious* Doctrine; becauſe he inlarged, with peculiar Aſſiduity, upon Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*; and frequently choſe ſuch Texts as, *Believe in the LORD JESUS, and Thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

"I preach Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST*; and give me "Leave to aſk, Whether You know, what Salvation by *CHRIST* "means?"—*Philocles* pauſed. He began to bluſh; would have eluded the Queſtion, and declined an Anſwer.—"No, ſaid "*Theoderus*: You muſt permit me to inſiſt upon a Reply. Be- "cauſe, if it be a *right* one, it will juſtify me and my Conduct: "if it be a *wrong* one it will prove, that You blame you know "not what; and have more Reaſon to inform yourſelf, than to "cenſure others."

This diſconcerted him ſtill more. Upon which *Theoderus* proceeded. "Salvation by *CHRIST* means, not only a Deliver- "ance from the *Guilt*, but alſo from the *Power* of Sin. *HE* "*gave Himſelf for Us, that He might redeem Us from all Ini-* "*quity*; *redeem Us from our vain Converſation*, as well as deli- "ver Us from the Wrath to come.—Go now, *Philocles*, and tell "the World, that by teaching theſe Doctrines, I promote the "Cauſe of Licentiouſneſs. And You will be juſt as *rational*, "juſt as *candid*, juſt as *true*, as if You ſhould affirm, That "the *Firemen*, by playing the Engine, and pouring in Water, "burnt your Houſe to the Ground, and laid your Furniture in "Aſhes."

all its Commands. *Evangelical*, in reſpect to Us, who work not Ourſelves, but believe in the great FULFILLER of all Righteouſneſs.—This is much of the ſame Nature, with that other momentous Diſtinction in Divinity; Salvation is freely given, yet dearly bought. *Freely given*, with regard to Us: *dearly bought*, with regard to *CHRIST*. So, We are juſtified *by* Works, if You look forward to our SURETY? We are juſtified *without* Works, if You caſt a retroſpective View on Ourſelves.

Theron was ſilent. *Aſpaſio*, after a ſhort Interval, renewed the Diſcourſe.—I know not whether my Friend is yielding to my Arguments, or ſearching after Objections; deliberating upon a Capitulation, or muſtering his Forces for a freſh Sally. However, let me take this Opportunity of dropping a Hint, and ſuggeſting a Caution.

The grand Reaſon, which inclines ſome People to reject this comfortable Doctrine, lies concealed, if not in an abſolute Diſbelief of our LORD's eternal Glory and GODHEAD, yet in *unſettled* Apprehenſions of it, or an habitual *Inattention* to it. —If our SAVIOUR was not really GOD, as ſome Writers, unhappily miſtaken themſelves, endeavour to perſuade the World; it would be a reaſonable Practice, and intirely conſiſtent with their Scheme, to diſavow the Imputation of his Righteouſneſs. Becauſe, upon ſuch a Suppoſition, his Obedience was no more than bounden Duty; in which there could not be the leaſt Pretence to Merit, and which could be profitable to none but Himſelf. Whereas, if We verily believe Him to be the incarnate GOD, his Submiſſion to the Law becomes an Act of *voluntary* Humiliation. Which Circumſtance, together with the *tranſcendant* Dignity of his Perſon, renders his Obedience, not meritorious only, but inexpreſſibly and *infinitely* meritorious.

As the Blood of *CHRIST* is called GOD's *own Blood* *; ſo the Obedience of *CHRIST* was performed in the Perſon of that adorable MEDIATOR, *who is* GOD *over all* †. He acted through the

* Acts xx. 28. † Rom. ix. 5.

the whole Course of his Life, and suffered Death at the last, not merely as Man, but as GOD-Man; as JEHOVAH-JESUS; IMMANUEL.—— Let me intreat You to remember, nay, let me intreat You never to forget, this *all-important* Article of our Faith. And may the blessed SPIRIT of Wisdom give Us an Understanding, to know the weighty, the extensive Influence of so glorious a Truth!

Ther. Far be it from me, to derogate from the Dignity of our SAVIOUR's Person, or to depreciate the Merits of his mediatorial Office. Place them as high, as Words can reach; exalt them as far as Thought can soar; I stedfastly believe, You will still fall short, unmeasurably short, of their real Worth.—But this Consideration seems to increase the Absurdity of your Notion. For, if *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, *his very* Righteousness be imputed; then, the true Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* himself. Whereas, if You maintain, that his Righteousness is imputed only *as to its Effects*, You will keep clear of this Rock.

Asp. This, I apprehend, will be like keeping clear of *Scylla*, only to fall foul upon *Charybdis*.——What are the Effects of the MEDIATOR's Righteousness? Pardon of Sin, Justification of our Persons, and the Sanctification of our Nature. Shall We say, These Effects, these Benefits are imputed?—To *talk* of their Imputation, I think, is an Affront to sound Sense; as, I am sure, to be *put off* with their Imputation, would be a fatal Disappointment of our Hopes.—All these Benefits are, not imputed, but imparted; they are not reckoned to Us, but are really enjoyed by Us; ours they are, not barely in the divine Estimation, but by proper and personal Possession.

Yet, it does by no means follow, that Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* Himself: unless You can prove, that to be the *Receiver* is, in all Respects the same, as to be the *Author* and *Finisher* *. —The Righteousness of *CHRIST* arises wholly from Himself, the Source of ours subsists in Another.

* Heb. xii. 2.

ther. *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs is originally and abſolutely *his own*; whereas it is made ours in a way of Favour and gracious Imputation. Circumſtances theſe, which create a material Difference, which yield Room for a vaſt Pre-eminence.

Ther. But if *CHRIST*'s perfect Obedience be accounted ours, methinks, We ſhould have no more Need of *pardoning* Mercy than *CHRIST* himſelf.

Aſp. Yes; becauſe, *before* this Imputation, We were ſunk in Guilt, and dead in Sins. Becauſe, *after* it, We are defective in our Duty, and in many Things offend.

Ther. Does not this Doctrine render the Interceſſion of our SAVIOUR *ſuperfluous?* What Occaſion have *they* for an Advocate with the FATHER, whoſe Righteouſneſs has neither Blemiſh nor Imperfection?

Aſp. They ſtand in need of an Advocate; firſt, that they may be brought Home to the *REPAIRER* of *their Breaches* *, and made Partakers of his Righteouſneſs by a living Faith. Next, that their Faith may be preſerved, notwithſtanding all Oppoſition, ſtedfaſt and immoveable; or rather, may be carried on, victorious and triumphant, even to the End.

Ther. You ſay, "*CHRIST* performed all that was "conditionary;" then He *repented* for Us, and *believed* for Us. This muſt be admired in Purſuance of your Principles. But this is ſo wild a Notion, ſo contrary to Reaſon and Scripture, that to mention it, is to refute it.

Aſp. CHRIST performed whatever was required by the Covenant of Works, both before it was violated, and after it had been tranſgreſſed. But neither *Repentance* nor *Faith* were comprehended in this Inſtitution. It knew nothing of the One, and it would not admit of the Other.—It was not therefore neceſſary, neither indeed was it poſſible, for our ſpotleſs and Divine LORD, to repent of Sin, or believe in a SAVIOUR But he did unſpeakably more, *He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himſelf* †; He is Himſelf the

* Iſai. lviii. 12. † Heb. ix. 26.

SAVIOUR of all the Ends of the Earth; and He has Power to beſtow that bleſſed SPIRIT, which worketh Faith, and produceth Repentance.

Ther. However, from what You have advanced, *this* will unavoidably follow—That a Man is to be juſtified, under the Character of a notorious Tranſgreſſor of the Law; and juſtified under the Character of a ſinleſs Obſerver of the Law. And what is this, but a *glaring Inconſiſtency?*

Aſp. Not at all inconſiſtent but abſolutely needful, if We conſider thoſe diſtinct Branches of the divine Law, the *preceptive* and the *penal*. Both which, in caſe of Guilt already contracted, muſt neceſſarily be ſatisfied.—Not at all inconſiſtent, but perfectly harmonious, if We take in the two *conſtituent Parts* of Juſtification, The acquittance from Guilt, and a Title to Life. The former ſuppoſes Us to be Tranſgreſſors of the Law; and ſuch the higheſt Saints in the World are. The latter requires Us to be Obſervers of the Law; and ſuch muſt the Inheritors of Heaven be. —Much leſs is this inconſiſtent, if We conſider Believers in their perſonal and relative Capacity; as they are in themſelves, and as they are in their S U R E-T Y. —— Notorious Tranſgreſſors in Themſelves they have a ſinleſs Obedience in *C H R I S T*. The Conſciouſneſs of *that*, will be an everlaſting Motive to Humility; the Belief of *this*, an inexhauſtible Source of Joy.

All this is no more inconſiſtent, than the Union of a gloomy Contexture, and a lightſome Splendor, in thoſe detached Clouds, which float amidſt the Firmament. In themſelves, they are a *lowering* and *dark* Collection of Vapours; by the Impreſſion of the Sunbeams, they are *fair* and *bright* as the poliſhed Silver.

Ther. After all, the Imputation taught in Scripture, is not the Imputation of *C H R I S T*'s Righteouſneſs, but of our *own Faith*. Agreeably to the Apoſtle's expreſs Declaration, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed to Him for Righteouſneſs* *.

Aſp.

* Rom. iv. 3.

Aſp. This objection admits the Thing in Diſpute, though it controverts the Way and Manner of obtaining it. Admits the Neceſſity of ſome *active poſitive* Righteouſneſs in order to our juſtification. In this Particular, I am glad to agree with my *Theron:* and in this particular, I believe, the Generality of ſerious People agree with Us both —Whenever their Conſciences are awakened, and ſeek to eſtabliſh the Hope of eternal Life, they conſtantly turn their Eyes to ſome Righteouſneſs; which they apprehend, may, either in Whole or in Part, anſwer the Demands of the Law. Some look to their own *ſincere* Obedience. Others call into their ſuccour Works of *Supererogation.* My Friend would aſſign this Office to his *Faith.*

Ther. Is this a proper Anſwer to my Objection, *Aſpaſio?* The Text is point-blank againſt Your Tenet. You do wiſely therefore, not to conſront, but to elude the Evidence.

Aſp. I did not intend it for an Anſwer; only as an *occaſional* Obſervation, which nevertheleſs has a pretty cloſe Connection with the Subject.—Neither would I uſe ſo mean a Subterfuge, as to elude an Argument, which I could not confute. If my Friend had allowed me Leiſure to explain myſelf, this ſhould have been my Reply.

That a Man is not juſtified by Works, is a Poſition moſt clearly demonſtrated, and a Doctrine moſt zealouſly inculcated by St. *Paul.* That Faith is a Work *, exerted by the human Mind, is equally certain. Unleſs therefore We would render the Apoſtle inconſiſtent with Himſelf, We muſt underſtand the Paſſage in a qualified Senſe.—Why ſhould We not ſuffer Him to be his own Interpreter? Why ſhould We not take the *Narrative* of his Experience, for a *Comment* on his Doctrine? He declares that the Ground of his own Comfort, the Cauſe of his own Juſtification, was, not the *Grace* of *Faith*, but *the Righteouſneſs which is*

* So it is called by HIM, who knew what was in Man, and what were the Differences of Things; *This is* THE WORK *of GOD, that Ye believe on Him whom He hath ſent*, John vi 29.

of GOD by Faith *. Not the Act of Believing, but that grand and glorious Object of a Sinner's Belief, *The LORD our Righteousness*.

Besides; what was that Faith of *Abraham*, to which the Apostle refers! and which He proposes, as the invariable Model of our Justification? — It was Faith in the *promised Seed*; in *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous †. It was a firm Persuasion, that this illustrious PERSON should spring from his Loins; and be the Author of Forgiveness, Acceptance, and Salvation to Himself, and to a Multitude of Believers, numberless as the Stars of Heaven. Let Us tread in these Steps of the holy Patriarch, and We shall ascribe *little*, ascribe *nothing* to our Faith, but *all* to the infinitely excellent Obedience of our REDEEMER.

Ther. Sure, *Aspasio*, You will not presume to correct Inspiration! The inspired Writer makes no mention of a REDEEMER's Obedience. He says expressly and positively—*it*, that is, *Abraham*'s Faith, and not any Thing else, *was counted unto Him for Righteousness*.

Asp. True, *Theron*; as those Windows are reckoned, are counted, *The Lights* of your House. And why? Because they illuminate? No, but because they afford a Passage to the illuminating Rays. Through them, the first and best of Elements, is diffused into all your Habitation.—So *We are saved by Grace through Faith*; by Grace imputing, through Faith accepting, the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. Grace is the magnificent Source of this nobler Light; Faith is the Means of transmitting it into all the Faculties of the Soul.

When our LORD declares to the diseased Woman, *Thy Faith hath made thee whole* ‡: how are We to understand his Words? That the Patient's Belief, and not the Agency of *CHRIST*, wrought the Cure? To suppose this, would be extremely derogatory to the Power

* Phil. iii. 9.
† Compare *Gen.* xv. 5, 6. with *Gal.* iii. 16.
‡ Matt. ix. 22.

Power of our great PHYSICIAN. And if We aſcribe Juſtification to the Act of Believing, this will be equally derogatory to the Obedience of our great MEDIATOR. In the *former* Caſe, *CHRIST* and his omnipotent Operation, were All in All. In the *latter* Caſe, *CHRIST* and his infinite Merit, are All in All. In *both* Caſes, Faith is only the Eye to diſcern, or the Hand to receive, the ſovereign Good.

I would farther obſerve, That Faith is very particularly *diſtinguiſhed from* the Righteouſneſs which juſtifies. We read of the Righteouſneſs which is *by* Faith, which is *of* Faith *. This Form of Expreſſion, puts an apparent Difference between the evangelical Faith, and the evangelical Righteouſneſs. Since, whatever is *by* another, and *of* another, cannot, without the greateſt Violence to Reaſon and Language, be reckoned that other —If Faith was the Cauſe of our Acceptance with GOD, then We ſhould be juſtified by a Righteouſneſs, which is confeſſedly *imperfect*. For, who has ever attained to the higheſt Degree of this Virtue? Or whoſe Faith is not mixed with an Alloy of Unbelief?—If Faith itſelf was the Matter of our Juſtification, I ſee not how Boaſting could be *excluded*; how the Law could be *magnified*; or what Reaſon the Apoſtle could have, to account all Things, but the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, meaner than Droſs †.

Say not, that We preſume to correct Inſpiration. We only interpret the inſpired Word in an harmonious

* *Rom.* ix. 30. *Phil.* iii. 9. The Apoſtles, I believe, never make uſe of this Phraſe, δικαιοσύνη ὑπὲρ πίστεως, or δικαιοσύνη πίστιν, but ἐκ πίστεως or διὰ τῆς πίστεως. Not *for*, or on *Account of* our Faith, but *by* or *through* Faith. Making this Grace, not the procuring Cauſe, but only the Inſtrument of Application.——Such Language as the former, ſeems contrary to the ſound Words of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Yet, if *Theron*'s Senſe of the Text under Debate were admitted, the Doctrine contained in this unſcriptural and offenſive Style, is the unavoidable Conſequence.

† *Phil.* iii. 8. The Original is σκύβαλα—A Word of the moſt contemptible Meaning; it ſignifies the *worthleſs* Scraps, and *ſordid* Offals, that are caſt to the Dogs. The Reader may ſee this Paſſage more fully explained in *Letter* V.

Conſiſtency with itſelf. This Senſe is agreeable to the prevailing Doctrine, and to the current Language of Scripture.——To the *prevailing Doctrine*; which is *A Believing in HIM, who juſtifieth the Ungodly.* Sift and examine this Expreſſion; *Him* who juſtifieth. You will find, that the Work is *CHRIST*'s; *CHRIST*'s and no *Other*'s. The HOLY GHOST aſſigns not the leaſt Share, not ſo much as a Co-efficiency, to any other Cauſe. Faith therefore, if it preſumes to arrogate this exalted Prerogative, or if it pretends to the leaſt Part in this important Buſineſs, is a ſacrilegious Uſurper.—To the *current Language*; as when GOD is called our Fear *, our Hope †, our Joy ‡. In theſe Places, the Act is undoubtedly put for the Object. So, in the Paſſage before Us, the *Act* muſt denote the *Object* of Faith. It is to be underſtood, not abſolutely, but as ſome Divines ſpeak, objectively, inſtrumentally, relatively.

Ther. In the Name of Wonder, what can You mean by this Heap of harſh and obſcure Expreſſions! Let me intreat You, *Aſpaſio*, to ſpeak in your own Style, not in the Dialect of *Aquinas*. I have an irreconcilable Averſion to theſe ſcholaſtic Terms. They are the *Barbariſms* of Divinity. I know but one Uſe, they are fitted to ſerve; that is, to perplex and puzzle a Cauſe, You cannot maintain. Somewhat like the Liquor, which a certain Fiſh, when cloſely purſued, is ſaid to emit: by which the Water is darkened, and the Foe eluded.

Aſp. This, *Theron*, is the Meaning of our uncouth Phraſes: It is not Faith itſelf, which juſtifies; but that Righteouſneſs, which Faith continually *views*; which Faith delightfully *apprehends*, and on which it finally *terminates*.

To be plainer ſtill—We are juſtified by Faith, in the ſame Manner, as We are fed by the Hand; or as We are ſaid, to drink of a Cup. Neither the Hand nor the Cup are the *Cauſe* of our Suſtenance, but the *Inſtruments*, one of conveying it, the other of receiving it.

* Gen. xxxi. 42, 53. † Pſal. lxxi. 5. Jer. xiv. 8.
‡ Pſal. xliii. 4.

it *.—If an Apoſtle affirms, *We are juſtified by Faith*; Faith itſelf declares, *In the LORD I have Righteouſneſs.* Put theſe Paſſages together, and You will have the true Senſe of our Doctrine, and the true Doctrine of the Goſpel.

When *Themiſtocles* fled from the Malice of his own Countrymen, what recommended Him to the Protection of King *Admetus?*——Not his Name; that was obnoxious—Not his Actions; they had been hoſtile—But the Perſon of the *young Prince*; whom the diſtreſſed Refugee caught up in his Arms; and, charged with theſe Credentials, preſented Himſelf to the royal Parent †.—So, Faith recommends to GOD, and juſtifies the Soul, not for itſelf, or its own Worth; but on Account of what it *preſents*, and what it *pleads*.

Ther. Is not this a fanciful Diſtinction, and an exceſſive Refinement? Has it any Foundation in Scripture?

Aſp It is implied in almoſt all the Repreſentations of *CHRIST*, and all the Deſcriptions of Faith, which occur in the ſacred Writings.

CHRIST is likened to *Clothing*; and Believers are ſaid to *have put on CHRIST* ‡. Now, it cannot be the Act of putting on, that covers ours Bodies, or

 keeps

* Though I am entirely of *Theron*'s Mind, and can by no means admire our *ſcholaſtic* Divines, or their *logical* Terms; yet a Remark from *Paræus*, couched in this Style, is ſo pertinent to the Purpoſe, and ſo full an Explication of the Point, that it would be an Injury to the Cauſe, not to make it a Part of my Notes. And ſome Readers, I apprehend, not much acquainted with this old-faſhioned Dialect, may be well enough pleaſed to view a Specimen; and like it, as they do the *Ruſt* of a *Medal*, merely for its Uncouthneſs and Antiquity.

" Faith juſtifies, ſays my Author, not *effectively*, as working " an habitual Righteouſneſs in Us; not *materially*, as though it " were itſelf the conſtituent Cauſe of our Juſtification; but it " juſtifieth *objectively*, as it apprehendeth *CHRIST*; and *inſtru-* " *mentally*, as it applieth his Righteouſneſs."

† This, ſays *Plutarch*, was a Cuſtom peculiar to that Country; was reckoned the moſt ſolemn Method of ſupplicating Favour; and *ſeldom* met with a Repulſe.——To which I may add, It is a Cuſtom that *Chriſtians* ſhould imitate, in all their Addreſſes to the *GOD* and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. When thus uſed, thus improved, it will *never* fail of Succeſs.

‡ Gal. iii. 27.

keeps them warm; but the commodious Garment which is wore.—He is compared to *Bread: I am the Bread of Life* *. Shall we say? It is the Act of Eating, which ſtrengthens the Conſtitution, and recruits our Spirits. No ſurely; but the Food eaten and digeſted.——*CHRIST* was typified by the *City of Refuge* †; and Sinners, by the obnoxious Man-ſlayer. Who, if He fled to one of thoſe privileged Abodes; and there remained, was ſafe. No Proſecution againſt Him could be valid: He had nothing to fear from the Avenger of Blood: In this Caſe, was it the bare Act of Flying, that ſcreened the criminal? By no means: this *conveyed* him to a Place of Security. But the *Place itſelf* was his Sanctuary, his Aſylum, his Safeguard.

Faith is ſtyled, *A Receiving of CHRIST* ‡: *As many as received Him, to them gave he Power*, or granted the Privilege, *to become the Sons of GOD*. The Office of Faith is, according to this Definition, not to contribute its Quota, much leſs to depoſit the whole Sum, but to take and uſe the ineſtimable Gift.——Faith is called, *A Looking unto JESUS* §; in Alluſion, I ſuppoſe, to the famous Expedient, provided for the wounded *Iſraelites* ‖. Our crucified LORD was prefigured, by the brazen Serpent: our Guilt, by the Stings of the fiery Serpents; and our Faith by looking to the miraculous Remedy. Did the healing Power, I would aſk, reſide in the mere Act of viewing? No: but in the Emblem of a dying SAVIOUR, elevated on

* John vi. 35. † Numb. xxxv. 13.

‡ *John* i. 12. See alſo *Rom.* v. 17. Where a Critic of accurate Judgment, and delicate Taſte (though little known in *England*) makes this Remark on the Word λαμβανοντες *Non juſtificat Actus ſumendi, quatenus eſt Actus; ſed illud quod ſumitur aut apprehenditur.* BENGELIUS in loc.——His Annotations on the New Teſtament are comprized in a ſmall *Quarto* Volume. They preſent the Reader with many refined Obſervations on the Elegancies of the Style, and Sublimity of the Doctrines. They are a Pattern of the conciſe Manner; and, which is perhaps the *crowning* Excellency, they all along indicate a Heart warm and glowing with the Love of its Subject.

§ Heb. xii. 2. ‖ Numb. xxi. 8.

on the Pole, and ordained for the Recovery of the People. *Here* all the Efficacy was lodged. *From hence* it was all derived. The Action of the Eye, like the Office of Faith, was only to fetch home, and apply the ſanative Virtue.

Once more; Faith is repreſented, as *laying hold* on GOD our SAVIOUR *; leaning upon our BELOVED †; *cleaving* to the LORD ‡. —— Pleaſe to take notice of yonder Vine. Its Shoots are weak, and its Branches flimſy. Being abſolutely unable to ſupport themſelves, they are furniſhed with a very remarkable Set of Claſpers. Which, like ſo many Fingers, lay hold on the Pegs of the Wall, or faſten themſelves to the Poles within their Reach. Without ſuch a Proviſion, the Boughs muſt lie proſtrate on the Ground, and be expoſed to the Inſults of every Foot. Whereas by this kind Contrivance of Nature, ſo creeping a Plant will climb into the Air, and enjoy the Breeze; ſo feeble a Plant will ſtand out the Winter, and defy the Storms.—An inſtructive Admonition to Sinners! And no contemptible Illuſtration of Faith, eſpecially in its principal and moſt diſtinguiſhing Employ! Thus let us apprehend the bleſſed *JESUS*; hold us faſt by our adored REDEEMER; cleave to his ineffable Worthineſs, as thoſe twining Tendrils, by repeated Circumvolutions, adhere to their ſubſtantial Supporters. Then ſhall we riſe, by Merits *not our own*, from the moſt abject and miſerable Condition, to a State of everlaſting Honour and Joy.

Ther. Some People, I believe, would hardly forbear ſmiling at the Peculiarity of your Diction; and might be inclined to call your Diſcourſe *Canting*, rather than Reaſoning. For my own Part, I muſt acknowledge, that, as all your peculiar Phraſes are derived from the Scriptures, I hear them with Reverence, rather than any Diſpoſition to ſneer. Was my Friend delivering a *Latin* Oration, it would be a ſufficient Warrant for any of his Expreſſions, to prove that they came from the *Ciceronian* Mint. And will

* Iſai. xxvii. 5. † Cant. viii. 5. ‡ Acts xi. 23.

it not be, at leaſt, an equally ſufficient Authority, for any Modes of Speech uſed in a *theological* Eſſay, to alledge that they bear the Stamp of the *Bible*.

Though I make no Objection to your Language, I have yet another Scruple with regard to your Doctrine. ——— Do the *antient Fathers* adopt or inculcate this imputed Righteouſneſs? If it was ſo important an Article of our Faith, ſurely it could not be *unknown* in thoſe early Ages, which were ſo near the apoſtolical Fountain. It would not have been *omitted* by thoſe zealous Preachers, who choſe to endure all the Rigours of Perſecution, rather than renounce their holy Profeſſion.

Aſp. I think, it were ſufficient to anſwer this Queſtion, by aſking another——Do the Apoſtles, does the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD ſpeaking in Scripture, inculcate this Doctrine, or diſplay this Privilege? If ſo, We need not be very ſollicitous for any farther Authority. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony* *, is our grand, our final Appeal. Amidſt all the Darkneſs and Uncertainty, which evidently run through the Writings of the beſt of Men, this is our unſpeakable Happineſs, That *We have a more ſure Word of Prophecy; to which We do well to take heed* †.

However; to be a little more particular---It cannot be expected, that We ſhould find many Paſſages in thoſe pious Authors, very ſtrong and very explicit, upon the Point. Becauſe, in their Days, it was not ſo profeſſedly oppoſed; and therefore could not be ſo exactly diſcuſſed, as in latter Ages. Nevertheleſs, they have left enough behind them, to avouch the Subſtance of what We aſſert; That *a Man is not juſtified by any Works, Duties, or Righteouſneſs of his own, but only by Faith in JESUS CHRIST.*—I cannot ſay, that I have charged my Memory with their very Words; and for that Reaſon, muſt not attempt at preſent to make any Citation. But, when a proper Opportunity offers, and their Works are before me, I may poſſibly produce a few of their Teſtimonies.

In

* Iſai. viii. 20. † 2 Pet. i. 19.

In the mean Time, I can mention a Set of Writers whose Attestation will, I imagine, carry as much Weight with my Friend, as the united Voice of the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers.

Ther. Who are they?

Asp. Our venerable *Reformers*. The Homilies composed by those excellent Divines, are as express to my Purpose, as they are unexceptionable in their Evidence. This is their Language—"The true Understanding of this Doctrine, *We be justified freely by Faith without Works*, is not, that this our *Act to believe*, or this our *Faith* in *CHRIST*, doth justify Us: for that were to count Ourselves to be justified by some Act or Virtue, that is, *within ourselves*. But the true Meaning thereof, is That although We hear GOD's Word, and believe it; although We have Hope and Faith, Charity and Repentance, and do never so many good Works: Yet We must renounce the Merit of all our Virtues and good Deeds, as things that be far too weak and insufficient, to deserve Remission of Sin, and our Justification. We must trust only in GOD's Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High-Priest and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, the SON of GOD, offered for Us upon the Cross.

The Homily subjoins a very apposite Illustration; which may conclude our Discourse with perfect Propriety, and, I hope, with equal Efficacy.—"So that as St. *John Baptist*, although He were never so virtuous and godly a Man, yet in the Matter of forgiving Sin, He did put the People from Him, and appoint them unto *CHRIST*; saying thus unto them, Behold! Yonder *is the LAMB of GOD, which taketh away the Sins of the World*: Even so, as great and as godly a Virtue as the lively Faith is, yet it *putteth Us from itself*, and remitteth Us unto *CHRIST*, for to have only by Him for Remission of Sins or Justification. So that our Faith in *CHRIST*, as it were, saith unto Us thus, it is not I that take away your Sins, but it is *CHRIST* only; and to Him only I send You for that Purpose, forsaking

"therein

" therein all your good Words, Thoughts, and " Works, and only, putting your Truſt in *CHRIST* *."

Ther. If there be any tolerable Senſe of the Notion under Debate, I think it muſt be underſtood as follows.—*CHRIST*'s Perſormance of the Law of his Mediation, or, in other Words, his unſinning Obedience to the moral Law, and the ſpotleſs Sacrifice of Himſelf to the vindictive Juſtice of God; theſe are the *only* valuable Conſiderations, on Account of which, the *gracious* GOD reſtores guilty Creatures to a State of Acceptance with his Divine MAJESTY.

Aſp. I am far from denying your Propoſition. I rejoice in the Propriety of my *Theron*'s Sentiments. May his Faith, which is *thus far* advanced, be carried on by Grace till it is completed in Glory!—— That unſinning Obedience, and that ſpotleſs Sacrifice, are indeed the only valuable, they are alſo the *truly*, or rather the *infinitely* valuable Conſideration; which has fully merited for Us the Remiſſion of Sins, and the Enjoyment of Life; and this not only from the gracious, but even from the *juſt*, the faithful, the righteous GOD.

But then they muſt be *imputed*, in order to furniſh Us with a Claim, and inveſt Us with a Right to the purchaſed Privileges.—Suppoſe them not imputed; and what becomes of our *Intereſt* in them? They are like a Medicine prepared, but not applied. —Suppoſe them imputed; and they lay a firm, an apparent, a rational *Foundation*, for every pleaſing Hope, and for every heavenly Bleſſing.

Ther. I fear, I have acknowledged too much.—— My Thoughts fluctuate. My Mind is unſettled.—— I would not withſtand the Truth. I would not diſbelieve any Doctrine of the Goſpel. Yet—what ſhall I ſay. While I *liſten* to your Reaſoning I am half a Convert. When I *recollect* the Objections, I revert to my firſt Opinion.

Of this however, I am convinced, That human Righteouſneſs is *inſufficient* for our Juſtification. Here your Arguments have carried their Point. I ſhall hence-

* See the ſecond Part of the *Homily on Salvation*.

henceforth place my Hopes of everlasting Happiness, not upon any Works of my own, but upon the free Goodness, and unbounded Beneficence, of the Supreme BEING. Pursuant to that Maxim of Scripture, *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life.*

Asp. You do right, *Theron*, to expect eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, not as the Wages of your own obediential Service. But be pleased to remember, that all the Gifts of Grace, though perfectly *free* to Sinners, are founded upon a grand and inestimable *Price*, paid by their SAVIOUR.—Are they intirely absolved from Guilt? It is because *CHRIST* gave his Life for their Ransom.——Are they heard with Acceptance when they pray? It is because their exalted HIGH-PRIEST intercedes in their Behalf.—Are they completely justified, and instated in endless Bliss? It is because their REDEEMER's consummate Obedience, is the glorious Equivalent for this and every other Blessing. Therefore, when You mention eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, You should not forget to add with the Holy Apostle, *through JESUS CHRIST our LORD* *

——————Well, my *Theron*; what say You farther? Is your Quiver emptied? Are your Scruples satisfied? May I interpret this Silence as an Act of Assent?

Ther. Observe, how the *Ranunculuses*, on yonder gay Parterre, have contracted their spreading Tufts, and the *Tulips* have closed their expanded Cups. While all the neighbouring Flowers, have shut their ivory Doors, or drawn their Velvet Curtains.—Such is the State of my Thoughts. They are all bent inwards: *collected* in themselves; and *pondering* upon your Discourse. Which has inclined me, before I was aware, to contemplate, rather than talk.—You will excuse my Thoughtfulness, *Aspasio*. Or, if it wants an Apology, You must blame Yourself. For, had your Reasons been less cogent, my Attention had been more disengaged.

* Rom. vi. 20.

Asp.

Asp. My dear *Theron*, I shall only wish, in Allusion to your own Simile, and in the Language of the best of Books; That these Truths may *distill as the Dew* * upon your Mind, and *lie all Night upon your Branches* †. This, I am persuaded, is the only Way to have all your Comforts *green before the Sun*, and all your Virtues *flourish as an Herb*. Whereas, under the Influence of any other Faith, I am afraid, they will be as the Garden, that is visited with a Drought; or as the Leaves, that are smitten with a Blast.

Ther. I shall attentively consider both your Doctrine, and your Arguments. Which that I may execute, with more Ease, and to better purpose, be pleased to *sum up*, in a few Words, the Substance of what has passed.——This done, it will be time to withdraw. The Flowers, You see, are our Monitors. They have folded up their Robes, and veiled their Beauties. A Custom which they seldom use, till the *rising Damps* render it unsafe, for their Master to be among them; and the *surrounding Gloom* renders it difficult for His Eye to distinguish them.

Asp. You could not oblige me more, than by giving me such a Command.——We trust for Salvation,

Not on our *external Duties*. This were to build our House upon the Sand. Which when the Rains descend, when the Torrents pour, when the Winds blow with tempestuous Violence, will certainly fall; and bury the Builder, with all his vain Hopes, in irretrievable Ruin.

Not on the *Sincerity* of our *Hearts*. This, if opposed to *CHRIST*, and made the Rival of his Merits, will be a "despised broken Idol." *Despised*, by the infinitely sublime and majestic RULER of the World. *Broken*, with regard to the Stress We lay, or the Confidence We repose on so deceitful a Prop. No more able to stand in the Judgment of the Great Day, than *Dagon* was able to maintain his Station, before the Ark of the LORD GOD of Hosts §.

Not

* Deut. xxxii. 2. † Job xxix. 19. § 1 Sam. v. 3, 4.

Not upon our *Faith*. This is often weak, as the rickety Child: ſometimes quite faint, like a Perſon in a deep Swoon: always imperfect, like every other Performance of ours. Alas! To what afflicting Fears, to what grievous Deſpondency ſhould I, for my Part, be perpetually liable, if my own Faith was the Ground of my Juſtification. Bleſſed be the FATHER of Mercies! We have a ſurer Support. Not upon Faith, but upon its gracious AUTHOR, and glorious OBJECT, is the Hope of *Iſrael* founded. Yet

Not upon our LORD's Righteouſneſs, conſidered only as paſſive; but upon his *active* and *paſſive* Obedience united. All that He *did*, in Conformity to the Commands of the Law; and all that He *ſuffered*, in Submiſſion to its Penalty. Both which, immenſely dignified by his divine Nature, are a Baſis for our Faith, which nothing can ſhake; are a Foundation for our Affiance, which can never be removed.----Nothing elſe, in any Creature, or in all Worlds, could expiate the *leaſt Sin*. This, not only expiates all Sin, but gives a Title to *every Bleſſing*——to the Bleſſings of Grace, and of Glory——of evangelical Holineſs, and everlaſting Happineſs.

DIALOGUE XI.

ASPASIO.

I HAVE often purpoſed, and as often forgot to aſk my *Theron*——What *Picture* He was ſo attentively ſurveying, when I ſtole unperceived upon Him, in his favourite Arbour *.

Ther. I was indulging a penſive Pleaſure, in viewing the Ruins, and contemplating the Fate of *Babylon*——that renowned and opulent City! Once the Reſidence of the *Aſſyrian* Monarchs, and Capital of one of the

* *See* Dialogue V.

the greateſt Empires in the World. The Draught I held in my Hand, repreſented ſome of its Remains. And indeed this was the very laſt Subject, which employed my Thoughts. In the Morning, my Son brought me his Obſervations upon the Scene; which I have juſt now been reviſing.

For, I frequently ſet Him, to exerciſe his Judgment, or diſplay his Fancy, on remarkable Paſſages, which occur in Hiſtory.---He was lately commiſſioned to determine a Controverſy, between the illuſtrious *Leonidas*, and the leſs celebrated *Pædaretus*. This was the Point in Debate: Which of them diſcovered the *trueſt* Generoſity of Spirit, and the *moſt heroic* Love of their Country? The former, who willingly ſacrificed his Life in its Defence? Or the latter, who, when He was Candidate for a Seat among the Three Hundred, and loſt his Election; inſtead of being chagrined or diſſatisfied, went home unfeignedly rejoicing, "That there were found in *Sparta* three hundred "Men more worthy than Himſelf?"——The Taſk of this Day was, To give a *deſcriptive Picture* of thoſe wonderful Ruins.

Aſt. Pray, let me have the Pleaſure of hearing the young Gentleman's Performance.

Ther. It will be too long, and too puerile: tire your Patience, and offend your Taſte.

Aſp. I don't uſe to make either of theſe Complaints, when I am entertained with *Theron*'s Compoſitions. And, as the Son has ſo much of his Father's Genius, I am not at all apprehenſive of any ſuch Diſappointment.—We have a moſt agreeable Situation, and more than an Hour's Leiſure. I muſt therefore repeat my Requeſt.

Ther. 'Tis true, I have retouched the Sketch: which may render it ſomewhat more tolerable. And ſince You perſiſt in your Demand, I will read the Paper.——Only deſiring ſome allowance for a little *Luxuriancy* of Imagination. Which, in young Writers, it may be adviſeable to indulge, rather than repreſs. As Age and Judgment will, probably, come with the pruning Knife, and make the proper Retrenchments

trenchments.—I muſt farther obſerve, that, contrary to the Cuſtom which prevails in our Schools, I generally chooſe to have Him expreſs his Sentiments in *Engliſh*. Becauſe, it is in this Language, He muſt communicate *his own*, and become acquainted with the Ideas of *Others*. Becauſe, to acquire ſome good Degree of Propriety and Fluency in this his native Tongue, will be incomparably more ſerviceable, than to ſpeak *Latin* with the *Terentian* Elegance, or to write it with the *Ciceronian* Copiouſneſs.

Is this *Babylon!* The Glory of Kingdoms! The Beauty of the *Chaldean* Excellency!

W'here once the gorgeous Eaſt, with richeſt Hand,
Shower'd on her Kings barbaric Pearl and Gold.

How is She fallen! Fallen from the Height of Magnificence, into the Abyſs of Confuſion! What was once the Object of univerſal Admiration, is now a Spectacle of Aſtoniſhment and Horror.

The *Palace*, where Majeſty ſat inthroned like ſome terreſtrial Deity, is a Heap of Rubbiſh: no longer diſtinguiſhed by an Air of ſuperior Elegance, but by ronger and more melancholy Marks of departed ignity *. — Where, the Nobles of that *ſumptuous Court*, trailed along the Marble Pavements their Robes of Purple and Embroidery; there, the creſted Snake hiſſes, or the fierce invenomed Adder glides.

How changed is the hoſpitable *Hall*, and how diſgraced the *Room of State!* The firſt afforded a conſtant and cordial Reception to the welcome Gueſts; in the laſt, the great King gave Audience to his cringing, his adoring Vaſſals. Now, Thorns over-run the Circumference, and "Deſolation ſits in the Threſhold "of

* *Benjamin*, a Jew of *Tudela*, in his *Itinerary*, written about he Year of our LORD 1170, tells Us—"That He was upon "the Place, where this City formerly ſtood, and found it wholly "deſolated and deſtroyed. Only ſome Ruins of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s "Palace were ſtill remaining; but Men were afraid to go near "them, by reaſon of the many Serpents and Scorpions, that were "then in the Place."

" of them both."—Where are the Roofs of Ivory, painted with *Vermilion*, and adorned with *Sculpture?* The radiant Roofs, whofe Lamps of burnifhed Silver, pendent in many a blazing Row, yielded Light as from another Sky? Swept from their Foundations, they lie clotted with defiling Dirt, or clafped with tangling Briars.—*Mufic* no longer pours her Harmony, through the fpacious and extended Apartment; but the Night-Owl, neftling in fome Cleft of the Ruins, fcreams her harfh and portentous Diffonance. *Joy* no longer leads up the fprightly Dance, amidft the Luftre of that artificial Day; but the folitary Batt flits in filent Circles, or flaps her footy Wings. All thofe gay Delights—let the *Sons* of *Senfuality* hear the Tale, and take Warning from the Cataftrophe!—all thofe gay Delights are extinguifhed, like one of their feebleft Tapers; which, having illuminated for a-while the feftive Affembly, fhone itfelf to the Edges of the exhaufted Socket, and in a Moment flafhed into Stench and Darknefs.

The *Walls*, though cemented with Bitumen *, and confolidated into the Firmnefs of a Flint, are become like the broken Bubble. There was a Time, when the Inhabitants, confiding in the Strength of their Bulwarks, and the Multitude of their Towers, looked down with fearlefs Difdain on the Army of Befiegers. But now the Prophet's Threatening is moft terribly fulfilled: *The Fortrefs of the high Fort of thy Walls hath HE brought down, laid low, and brought to the Ground, even to the Duft* †. —— Where are the *Gates*,

* The Walls were built of Brick, and cemented with a *glutinous* Kind of Slime; which binds more firmly than any Mortar, and foon grows harder, than the Brick or Stones themfelves.—Thefe Fortifications were, according to the Account given by *Herodotus*, in *Breadth* eighty-feven Feet, in *Height* three hundred and fifty Feet, and reckoned to be abfolutely *impregnable*. Infomuch that the Inhabitants, when befieged by *Cyrus*, infulted Him from the Walls, and laughed at his Attempt, as a vain impracticable Project. —— Οι δε επ τω τειχει καταγελων την πολιορκιαν. Xenoph. *Inft. Cyr.* Lib. VII.

† Ifai. xxv. 12.

Gates, the grand and glittering Gates *, which admitted the triumphant Hoſts, or poured forth their numerous Legions againſt the Day of Battle? Not one Trace remains, to tell the inquiſitive Stranger; "Here the ſpacious Avenues opened: Here the maſſy "Portals roſe." — Commodious *Walks*, in which the cluſtering Merchants raiſed the buſſy Hum, and planned the Schemes of Commerce; ample *Streets*, in which Induſtry drove the toiling Car, or ſmote the ſounding Anvil; are ſhrouded with matted Graſs, or buried beneath the rankeſt Weeds. Silence, in both Places, a ſullen Silence reigns; and Inactivity, a death-like Inactivity, ſlumbers.

What is become of thoſe *Hanging gardens*, which, for curious Contrivance and ſtupendous Workmanſhip, were never equalled in any Nation under Heaven? *Terraces*, that overlooked the talleſt Houſes! *Parterres*, exalted to the Clouds, and opening their flowery Beauties in that ſtrange Region! *Groves*, whoſe very Roots were higher than the Tops of the loftieſt Trees †!——They are now ſmitten by a dreadful Blaſt. Their Beauty is decayed, like a withered Leaf. Their very Being is gone, like the Chaff of the Summer Threſhing-floors; which the Wind carrieth away, and its Place is no where found ‡. What was once the favourite Retreat of a Queen, and the Admiration of the whole World, is now a Neſt for poiſonous Reptiles, and a Kennel for ravenous Beaſts.— The Traveller, inſtead of expatiating with Delight, where this *penſile Paradiſe* flouriſhed, is ſtruck with Horror; keeps at a trembling Diſtance: and ſurveying the rueful Spot, cries out, *Righteous art Thou, O LORD, and true are thy Judgments!*

Here

* There were no leſs than an hundred Gates, all of *ſolid Braſs*. Hence it is, that when JEHOVAH promiſes to make *Cyrus* Maſter of *Babylon*, He ſpeaks in this very remarkable and particularizing manner; *I will break in Pieces before Thee the Gates of Braſs*, Iſai. xlv. 2.

† *Penſiles Horti ſunt, ſummam Murorum Altitudinem æquantes, multarumque Arborum Umbra & Proceritate amœni.*

CURT. Lib. V.

‡ Dan. ii. 35.

Here ſtands an *Obeliſk*, maimed by the Stroke of revolving Years, like a Mountain-Oak ſhattered by the flaming Bolt. Another, all unhinged and quite disjointed, ſeems to tremble before every Blaſt that blows.—— There, the *Pyramid* * ; firm as the ſolid Rock, and ſtable, One would have thought, as the everlaſting Hills ; wrenched from its mighty Baſe, is tumbled headlong in enormous Ruin, and has cruſhed many a Structure by its Fall. See yonder, the *triumphal Arch*, which exhibited, through its extenſive and beautiful Bend, an advantageous View of the Firmament. It was, once, the graceful Memorial of ſome celebrated Victory ; it is, now, converted into a Trophy of a very different Kind. Juſt retaining two uneven, battered, ragged Stumps, it ſerves to recognize the deſtructive Ravages of Time —— *Spires*, that pierced the Clouds, and ſhot into the Skies, are levelled with the trodden Soil. On *Pinacles*, to which the ſtrong winged Bird could hardly ſoar, the grovelling Worm crawls, and the ſordid Snail leaves her ſlimy Track.—*Baths*, that contained the tranſlucent Wave, and were ſo often perfumed with odoriferous Unguents, are choked with Filth ; the grand *Colonade*, that ſurrounded them, is ſhivered to pieces ; and the elevated *Dome*, that covered them, is daſhed to the Ground.——The public *Aqueducts*, which conveyed Cleanlineſs and Health along their cryſtal Currents, are degenerated into a ſtagnating Lake ; while croaking Vermin ſwarm among the Weeds, and noiſome Exhalations ſteam from the Mire.

Auguſt

* *Strabo* calls the Temple of *Belus* a *Pyramid*. Lib. XV. But if the Critics in Hiſtory ſhould queſtion or deny the Exiſtence of Pyramids among the *Babylonians*, for this and other Liberties uſed by our young Declaimer, *Horace* ſhall make an Apology :

——*Pictoribus atque Poetis*
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua Poteſtas.

Auguſt and ſtately *Temples*, that ſeemed to affect the Neighbourhood of Heaven *, are ſunk to the very Duſt.—Who can point the Spot where the conſecrated Victim bled, or the ſacred Fire glowed? Where the ſceptred Image lifted its majeſtic Head, or the venerating Crouds bowed the ſuppliant Knee †? Degraded are thoſe ſplendid Vanities, and caſt (according to the Denunciation of the ſacred Oracles) *to the Bats and to the Moles* §. All is low; low as the ſpurious Dignity of the Idols they complimented; low *as the Straw, that is trodden down for the Dunghill* ‖.

Sepulchres, the once venerable Repoſitories of the Dead, awful Manſions, deſtined to everlaſting Concealment; are cleft and rent aſunder. They diſcloſe the horrid Secrets of the Pit, and frightfully yawn upon the blaſted Day. Poſſibly, ſome ravenous Creature lurks within, that has already rifled the Tomb of its Hero; given the putrid Bones a new Grave; and waits only for the Approach of Night, to repeat his funeral Dirge in Yells.—*Inſcriptions*, deſigned to perpetuate ſome illuſtrious Character, or eternize ſome heroic Deed, are blended in the promiſcuous Maſs In vain, would the prying Antiquary ſearch for a legible or conſiſtent Sentence: In vain, attempt to find the memorable Names of a *Nebuchadnezzar* or a *Nimrod*. Theſe, though engraved on Plates of Braſs, or

* A Tower in the Temple of *Belus*, and dedicated to his Worſhip, was moſt amazingly high. It conſiſted of eight Piles of Building, erected one above another. It aroſe to the Elevation of ſix hundred Feet perpendicular. And is thought, by the learned *Bochart* to have been part of that ſuperb Work, which was begun when *the whole Earth was of one Language*: but miſcarried, or rather was providentially defeated, by the Confuſion of Tongues. In this Structure, there were doubtleſs very ſtrong Traces of that arrogant Boaſt; *Let Us build Us a City and a Tower, whoſe Top may reach to Heaven*, Gen. xi. 4.

† Alluding to that prodigious Inſtance of Profuſeneſs, Oſtentation, and idolatrous Madneſs, *the golden Image ſet up in the Plain of* Dura: *whoſe Height* (that is, the Height of the Statue and Pedeſtal taken together) *was threeſcore Cubits*. Dan. iii. 1. See PRIDEAUX's *Connection*, Vol. I. p. 95, *&c.* p. 567, *&c.*

§ Iſai. ii. 20. ‖ Iſai. xxv. 10.

or cut in Blocks of Marble, are loſt amidſt the ſtupendous Lumber; as Prints on the unſteady Sand are effaced, when returning Tides ſmooth the furrowed Beach.

Here and there a ſtraggling Cypreſs riſes, as it were with funeral Solemnity, amidſt the Waſte *. Somewhat like the black Plumes, nodding over the mournful Hearſe, they augment the Sadneſs of the Scene, and throw a deeper Horror on all below.—— No human Voice is heard, nor human Face ſeen, amidſt theſe deſolated Heaps. Too dreary, even for the Roam of Hoary Hermit, or the Cell of gloomy Monk. Abandoned they are, totally abandoned, to the Dominion of Solitude; or elſe, to the unmoleſted Reſort of ſhaggy Monſters, and feathered Hags; which ſtun the midnight Hours—*theſe*, with their importunate Shrieks—*thoſe*, with their execrable Howls.

See! to what a deſpicable, what an abhorred State, the proudeſt Monuments of earthly Grandeur, and the moſt coſtly Apparatus for earthly Felicity, may be reduced! A pregnant and alarming Proof, that, for *laſting Honour*, or *real Happineſs*,

They build too low, who build beneath the Skies.

Aſp. I very much approve the Choice of your Subject. The Ruins of *Perſepolis*, would have given Us a View of Magnificence in Abaſement. The Ruins of *Palmyra*, might have ſhewed Us Elegance in the Duſt. But the Ruins of *Babylon* diſplay at once, Magnificence and Elegance under an Eclipſe, *Scripture* and *Revelation* is their Glory.—The utter Deſtruction of this City, which was abſolutely unequaled † in every Inſtance

* *Rauwolf*, a *German* Traveller, who paſſed that Way, in the Year of our LORD 1574, ſays; "This Country is ſo dry and "barren, that it cannot be tilled; and ſo bare, that I ſhould "have doubted, whether the potent *Babylon* did ſtand there, if "I had not known it by ſeveral ancient and delicate Antiquities, "that are ſtill ſtanding hereabout in great Deſolation."

† *Unequaled* — Repreſented therefore by the *golden* Head, in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s prophetic Dream, and emblematic Image, *Dan.*

Inſtance of Dignity, and ſeemingly invincible by any Enemy, muſt certainly have been looked upon as the *moſt improbable* of Events. Nevertheleſs its utter Deſtruction was decreed by JEHOVAH, and denounced by his Prophet, ſeveral Ages before the Execution took place. The awful *Sentence* was not only denounced, but recorded; and is ſtill remaining, in the public Archives of our Religion.

Ther. Where is this Sentence recorded, and remaining?

Aſp. In the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*. And not only recorded, but in the moſt circumſtantial Manner, and with a minute Detail of the horrible Deſolations. Theſe are the Words of the inſpired Writer; BABYLON, *the Glory of Kingdoms, the Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency, ſhall be as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It ſhall never be inhabited: neither ſhall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation: Neither ſhall the Arabian pitch Tent there; neither ſhall the Shepherds make their Fold there. But wild Beaſts of the Deſart ſhall lie there, and their Houſes ſhall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls ſhall dwell there, and Satyrs ſhall dance there. And the wild Beaſts of the Iſlands ſhall cry in their deſolate Houſes, and Dragons in their pleaſant Palaces* *.

In the two firſt Sentences, is compriſed the moſt finiſhed Picture of Proſperity and Grandeur. *The Glory of Kingdoms*; beyond every other royal Seat, ſpacious, ornamented, and wealthy; revered by many conquered and tributary Dominions, as their Miſtreſs, and their Sovereign. — *The Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency:* The *Chaldeans*, who excelled all the Nations of the Earth in Riches, in Splendor, and in Power, *even they* gloried in this wonderful City. This was the higheſt Honour of the moſt illuſtrious, and chief Strength of the moſt victorious People; faireſt, where all

Dan. ii. 38.—And deſcribed by an antient Author, as *Omnium quas unquam Sol aſpexit Urbium maxima.*

PAUSAN. in Arcad.

* Iſai. xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

all was conſpicuouſly fair; nobleſt, where all was ſupereminently noble. — Yet this diſtinguiſhed, this crowning City, *ſhall*, at the blaſting of the Breath of JEHOVAH, *be* totally, totally deſtroyed, even *as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.*

In deſcribing the Overthrow, the Prophet is equally admirable: and riſes, by a moſt judicious Gradation, into all the Pomp of Horror: *q. d.* "Now, indeed, "it is thronged with Citizens; but, the Hour is com- "ing, when it ſhall be intirely depopulated, and not "ſo much as a ſingle Inhabitant left.—Leſt You ſhould "think, that in Proceſs of Time it may be re-edified, "and again abound with joyful Multitudes, *it ſhall "never be inhabited* more; no, *never be dwelt in* any "more, *from Generation to Generation*; but ſhall con- "tinue a diſmal Waſte, through all ſucceeding Ages. "—A Waſte ſo diſmal, that none of the neighbour- "ing *Shepherds* ſhall *make their Fold*, or find ſo much "as an occaſional Shelter for their Flocks; "where Kings, Grandees, and Crouds of af- "fluent Citizens, repoſed themſelves in profound "Tranquillity. Even the rude and roving *Arabian*, "ſhall not venture to *pitch his Tent*, nor be able to "procure for himſelf the poor Accommodation of a "Night's Lodging; where Millions of polite People "baſked in the Sunſhine of profuſe Proſperity.—In "ſhort; it ſhall neither be *habitable* or *acceſſible*; but "a *Dwelling place for Dragons, an Aſtoniſhment and a "Hiſſing* *. What was once the *golden City* †, and "the Metropolis of the World, ſhall be an everlaſt- "ing Scene of Deſolation and Horror, a fearful Mo- "nument of divine Vengeance, and an awful Admo- "nition to human Pride."

All this is foretold in Scripture; and, though to human Appearance impoſſible, though to human Apprehenſion incredible, was, in the appointed Time, moſt minutely accompliſhed. The Memorials and Evidences of the Accompliſhment remain to this very Day.

* Jer. li. 37. † Iſai. xiv. 4.

Day *. They are so *authentic*, that the most inquisitive Curiosity cannot doubt; and so *inconteſtable*, that the most bigotted Incredulity will not deny. And should not this teach Us, to reverence the Authority, to admire the Wisdom, and confide in the Promises of that heavenly Volume?

I know, You are not fond of Compliments, *Theron*. Therefore, instead of speaking my Opinion of your Son's Performance, I will endeavour to return your Favour.——You have entertained me with an Account of the most memorable Ruins extant in the material World. Let me present my Friend with a Picture of Ruins, no less *remarkable*, far more *deplorable*, and unspeakably *intereſting* to Us all. I shall give it, in the Colouring of a great Master; whose Works, this very Day, I happened to be perusing.

The Passage displays a Doctrine, of the utmost Importance in the Christian Scheme; and by one of the finest Pieces of Imagery, to be met with in elegant Writing. I think, it may be looked upon, as a *practical Improvement* of *Eugenio*'s Declamation. It pleased me so much, that I transcribed it; and I make no Apology for reading it, because I shall expect your Thanks.—Only let me hint, that it considers the

* It is said, by a very learned Author; *Babylonem usque eo concidiſſe, ut Nemo cum Fiducia illius Locum amplius demonſtrare queat.* i. e. "*Babylon* is now so totally destroyed, that the most skilful "Geographers cannot, with Certainty, determine the Place on "which it stood."

Should any of my Readers prefer this Account, I shall neither litigate the Point, nor be anxious for the Consequence. It may indeed rank *Eugenio*'s Composition among the Works of Fancy. But it will realize *Aſpaſio*'s Assertion, and corroborate his Argument. If We find *no Memorials* of the City, We have the *most evident* Verification, and the *fullest* Accomplishment, of the Prophecy.

If this be the Case, it gives an amazing Emphasis to that just, but terrible Decree, issued from the supreme Tribunal; *I will ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts.* "I will not only lay it in Ruins, but extirpate it from the Earth. "I will efface the very Footsteps of its Existence; and not leave "so much as a *Fragment* or a *Trace* of the magnificent, but "wicked *Babylon*." Isai. xiv. 23.

human Soul, as originally an Habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT; and then, ſpeaking of its fallen Condition, proceeds.

" That He *hath withdrawn Himſelf*, and left *this* " *his Temple* deſolate, We have many ſad and plain " Proofs before Us. The *ſtately Ruins* are viſible to " every Eye, that bear in their Front (yet extant) this " doleful Inſcription; HERE GOD ONCE DWELT. " Enough appears of the admirable Frame and Struc- " ture of the *Soul of Man*, to ſhew the divine Preſence " did ſometimes reſide in it; more than enough of " vicious *Deformity*, to proclaim He is now *retired* " and *gone*. The *Lamps* are extinct, the Altar over- " turned; the *Light* and *Love* are now vaniſhed, " which did the one *ſhine*, with ſo heavenly Bright- " neſs; the other *burn*, with ſo pious Fervour. The " *golden Candleſtick* is diſplaced, and thrown away as " an uſeleſs Thing, to make room for the Throne of " the *Prince of Darkneſs*. The *ſacred Incenſe*, which " ſent rolling up in Clouds its rich Perfumes, is ex- " changed for a poiſonous helliſh Vapour; and here " is, *inſtead of a ſweet Savour, a Stench*. The comely " Order of this Houſe is turned all into Confuſion. " The *Beauties of Holineſs* into *noiſome Impurities*. " The *Houſe of Prayer* to a *Den* of *Thieves*, and that " of the worſt and moſt horrid Kind; for every *Luſt* " is a *Thief*, and every *Theft* is *Sacrilege*. Continual " Rapine and Robbery is committed upon *holy Things*. " The noble Powers, which were deſigned and dedi- " cated to *divine Contemplation* and *Delight*, are alie- " nated to the Service of the moſt deſpicable Idols, " and employed unto the vileſt Intuitions and Em- " braces; to behold and admire *lying Vanities*, to in- " dulge and cheriſh Luſt and Wickedneſs.

" There is not now a Syſtem, an intire Table of " *coherent Truths* to be found, or a *Frame of Holineſs*, " but ſome ſhivered Parcels. How many Attempts " have been made, ſince that fearful Fall and Ruin " of this Fabric, to compoſe again the Truths of ſo " many ſeveral Kinds into their diſtinct Orders, " and make up Frames of Science or uſeful Know- " ledge!

" ledge! and after so many Ages, nothing is finished " in any Kind. Sometimes, Truths are misplaced, " and what belongs to *one Kind*, is transferred to " *another*, where it will not fitly match; sometimes, " *Falshood inserted*, which shatters or disturbs the whole " Frame. And what with much fruitless Pains, is " done by one Hand, is dashed in pieces by another; " and it is the Work of a *following* Age to sweep away " the fine spun Cobwebs of a *former*. And those " Truths, which are of greatest Use are least re- " garded; their Tendency and Design are overlook- " ed, or they are so loosened and torn off, that they " cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the " Soul; but hover as *faint ineffectual Notions*, that " signify Nothing. Its very fundamental Powers " are shaken and disjointed, and their Order towards " one another confounded and broken. So that what " is judged *considerable*, is not *considered*; what is re- " commended as *eligible* and *lovely*, is not loved and " chosen. Yea, the Truth which is after Godliness, " is not so much *disbelieved*, as *hated*, *held in Unrigh- " teousness*; and shines as too feeble a *Light*, in that " malignant Darkness, which *comprehends it not*. You " come, amidst all this Confusion, as into the ruined " Palace of some great Prince, in which You see here " the Fragments of a noble Pillar, there the shattered " Pieces of some curious Imagery: and all lying neg- " lected and useless amongst Heaps of Dirt. He that " invites You to take a View of the Soul of Man, " gives You but such another Prospect, and doth but " say to You, *Behold the Desolation*, all Things rude " and waste. So that should there be any Pretence " to the divine Presence, it might be said, *If GOD be " here, why is it thus?* The faded Glory, the Dark- " ness, the Disorder, the Impurity, the decayed " State in all respects of this Temple, too plainly " shew, *The GREAT INHABITANT is " gone.*"

* See Mr. *Howe*'s Treatise, intitled *The living Temple.*

Ther. Your Painter, I muſt own, is a Maſter in his Profeſſion; and ſeems to have a peculiar Talent for a *Night-piece*—But why, I beſeech You, ſo much of his Shades and Solemnity? Has He no Colours, but the dark? No Lineaments, but the ſour? Could He not allow Us one bright Tint, one ſmiling Feature? when He was copying the nobleſt Being in this ſublunary World?—Is it for the Honour of the great CREATOR, to give ſuch a deformed Draught of his moſt finiſhed Workmanſhip?

Aſp. It reflects no kind of Diſhonour upon the Architect of *Babylon*, that its Palaces are fallen, its Edifices demoliſhed, and its Walls levelled with the Ground. They might have been built with the exacteſt Symmetry, and once embelliſhed with every graceful Ornament; notwithſtanding the Stroke of Violence, or the Sap of Years, have now reduced them to Heaps of Rubbiſh.—The human Soul, when recent from the Inſpiration of the ALMIGHTY, was bright with Knowledge, amiable with Virtue, and in every reſpect excellent. But *How*—to ſpeak in the Language of the mourning Prophet; a Language never more pertinent than on the preſent Occaſion—*How is the Gold become dim! How is the moſt fine Gold changed!*

Ther. Man's Soul is rational and eternal; is the Offſpring of the DEITY, and capable of reſembling its MAKER.

Aſp. What *Milton* allows to the fallen Archangel, I can readily allow to fallen Man:

——————————He had not loſt
All his original Brightneſs.

The grand and diſtinguiſhing Faculties of the Soul remain. Juſt as, when a Fountain is poiſoned, the Waters continue to flow: but flow no longer with *Health*, flow rather with *Death* in the Stream. Theſe very Faculties, unleſs renewed and regulated by the Influence of Religion, muſt be our preſent Miſery, and will prove our everlaſting Curſe.—"The Soul,"

You

You ſay, " is rational, is eternal." And do not even the Devils poſſeſs the Powers of Reaſon? Is not *their* Exiſtence alſo of an endleſs Duration? Yet are they of all Creatures, the moſt execrable and the moſt miſerable.

You call the human Soul, the Offspring of the DEITY. And You call it properly. Muſt We not then adopt the Prophet's Exclamation. " *How art* " *Thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning* *! How " art Thou degenerated, O Man, Son of the MOST " HIGH! Thy glorious Original ſerves only to ſet " forth, with more glaring Evidence, thy deplorable " Apoſtacy."

Capable, You add, of reſembling its MAKER. This, I acknowledge, is a valuable Prerogative. In this the infernal Spirits have no Share. But this Capacity will always lie dormant; will never awaken into Act; never be eſtabliſhed in Habit; unleſs Almighty GRACE intervene.

Ther. The moſt celebrated Philoſophers of Antiquity, frequently exhort their Readers to *follow Nature*; as a certain Guide to true Excellence ——Many eloquent Writers of our own Country, inlarge upon the *Dignity* of human Nature; and from this Topic derive very forcible Arguments, for a correſpondent Dignity both of Sentiment and Behaviour —Upon what can thoſe Principles of the antient Sages, and of our later Moraliſts, be founded?

Aſp. Indeed, *Theron*, I am at a loſs to tell. If they have any Foundation, it is merely imaginary; — not laid in Truth, nor confirmed by Experience. According to my Apprehenſion, they invert the Order of Things. They take that for a *Poſtulatum*, which ought to be ranked among the *Deſiderata*; and make an Axiom of a mere Figment.

Had Man continued, as He was created; to act according to Nature, and according to the Law of GOD, would have been one and the ſame Thing. For which Reaſon, We find no Precepts of Religion, no Delineation of Morality, given to *Adam* in Para-

* Iſai. xi. 12.

dise. Because, Religion and Morality were engraven on his Heart? or rather, they resulted from the very Bent and Tendency of his perfect Frame. — But since the Fall it is quite otherwise

Ther. Have not many of the antient Worthies been *living Confutations* of your Opinion? Wise Philosophers, judicious Lawgivers, and steady Ministers of Justice? Their Desires refined, their Affections benevolent, their whole Conduct upright.

Asp. I cannot forbear wondering, that You should instance in Lawgivers and Ministers of Justice. Since the very Institution of their Office *presupposes* the Depravity of Mankind. Was human Nature agitated by no irregular or vicious Inclinations, the Barrier of Laws would be as needless in civil Societies, as the vast Banks of *Holland* are needless in our upland Counties.

But this, You will say, is a digressive Observation. Your Question requires a positive Answer. And it is easy to answer, That the Painting is beyond the Life. If my Author has been too free with the *dark*, my Friend has been too lavish of the *glittering* Colours.—Those famous Men might aim, perhaps, at the Excellency You describe. Not one of them came up to the Mark.—Or suppose they did, this would not invalidate my Tenet.

Ther. This not invalidate your Tenet! Then Demonstration carries no Conviction.

Asp. Pray, who is your greatest Favourite, among all the renowned Persons of Antiquity?

Ther. Socrates.—He stands at the Head of the Class; and was, indisputably, the wisest and the best of the Heathen World.

Asp. I think so too.—Be pleased, however, to recollect the Story of the *Physiognomist*; who pretended to discover the Disposition of the Mind, by the Cast of the Countenance. The Professor of this occult Science undertook, You know, to exercise his Skill upon *Socrates*; and pronounced Him, after an Examination of his Features, lascivious, passionate, and morose.—This Judgment, so extravagantly wide of the

the Truth, was bringing a Storm of Ridicule and Resentment upon the poor Fortune-teller. When the ingenuous Philosopher interposed, and owned the Description to be exactly true. That *such* was his *natural* Temper; and if his Conversation had been of a different Turn, it was owing to the Aids of Philosophy.——So that, even in your most finished * Character, there was no innate Dignity. All was *adventitious*.

Ther. If Corruption was derived unto all Men from their Forefather *Adam*; methinks, all should be equally corrupt. But this is contrary to known Fact. Some we see naturally loving and lovely; gentle in their Manners; and subject to no inordinate Appetites.

Asp. Some Persons may be of *more composed*, or, if You please, of *less dissolute* Manners, than the Generality of other People. Thanks to a better Temperature of their Constitution, or a more watchful Care in their Education.—But shew me the unregenerate Man, who is subject to *no* inordinate Appetites? One vile Affection may check another, or a Sense of Decency may hold the Curb upon all. But it is one

 Thing,

* Though I love and admire the Character of *Socrates*, yet I cannot approve the whole of his Conduct. One Thing which gives me particular Offence is the *habitual* Practice of *Swearing*, which occurs in all his Conferences which his Pupils. Μα τον Δια. Νη Δι. or some such Appeal to the DEITY is used, not only in every Discourse, but almost in every Page; and that upon the most *unnecessary* Occasions.——I have often wondered, that so polite a Writer as *Xenophon*, should admit this flagrant Impropriety into his Dialogues. Which, besides its *irreligious* Air, is somewhat like the *Crambe repetita*; and recurs, and recurs, and recurs, till it is really tiresome. But much more I wonder, that his excellent Matter, should suffer the Sanction of an Oath, to become so *trivial*; and the Honour of his *Jupiter*, so *cheap*.

This proves the deplorable *Blindness* of human Reason; which could mistake so notorious a Profanation of the Divine Name, for a genteel Embellishment of Speech—— It shews Us likewise, our extreme need of that revealed Law, which, among other refined Precepts, unknown to the Religion of Nature, injoins; *Above all Things, swear not*—And *Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy GOD in vain.*

Thing, to have the wild Beaſt in the Heart chained; another to have Him expelled, or the Lion transformed into a Lamb.

Ther. Have We not often obſerved heroic Courage, and a Generoſity of Spirit, where the Education has been none of the ſtricteſt? To what can we aſcribe theſe laudable Qualities, but to the innate Virtue and Nobleneſs of the Temper, working without any auxiliary Succours?

Aſp. Virtue, *Theron*, is a complete Aſſemblage, not ſome *disjointed* Shreds, of laudable Qualities. Theſe you mention, if not accompanied with the whole Circle of amiable Accompliſhments, are no more to be called Virtue; than two or three ſcattered Fragments of an Edifice, are to be honoured with the Appellation of an Houſe.—How often are thoſe very Perſons, with all their Fortitude, Slaves to ignoble Pleaſures, or in bondage to the baſeſt Luſts. A moſt infallible Indication, that they have no uniform Generoſity, nor any *real* Courage.—Deſire of Fame, may prompt to many ſuch Acts, as *dazzle* the ſuperficial Eye: which yet are far, very far from *genuine* Virtue.

Ther. Do You then attribute the *Grecian* Politeneſs and the high *Roman* Spirit, all the gallant Actions of their Heroes and Generals, to a Deſire of Fame?

Aſp. There is Reaſon to ſuſpect, that they derived their Origin from ſome improper Motive. And no Motive was more artfully inſtilled, or more aſſiduouſly cheriſhed, than the Spirit of Ambition.—View their Crowns, their Statues, their triumphal Solemnities—Read their Orators, their Hiſtorians, their Poets. —The former were the *School*, the latter were the *Maſters*, to inculcate this grand Leſſon.

Let Us conſider the *Romans* a little more attentively; and not amidſt the Dregs of their Community, but in their very beſt Ages; when their Republic ſubſiſted, and their *Scipios* flouriſhed. Many great and ſhining Deeds were undoubtedly performed. But did they ſpring from a *reverential Regard* to the Supreme BEING;

BEING; from Obedience to his Will, or Zeal for his Honour?

If this Principle should be thought too refined, did they proceed from a love to their *Fellow-creatures?* In case, neither of these Motives † actuated their Conduct, it can never be placed to the Account of Virtue.——Had Benevolence been their leading Principle, why such *Inhumanity* to *Carthage?* Why must that opulent City be laid in Ashes, and her numerous Citizens be put to the Sword? Were they Enemies to Mankind, or a Nuisance in the World? You well know, that they were only too industrious, and too powerful. By which means, they would be in a Condition, to eclipse the Magnificence of the *Roman* Name, and dispute the Prize of Sovereignty with the *Roman* State. For this Crime—a Crime, in Ambition's Eye, absolutely inexcusable—even *Cato*'s upright Soul, shall doom them to utter Destruction; and *Scipio*'s gentle Hand, shall execute the horrid Decree.

Is *this* Virtue? Does Virtue ravage Countries, from the mere Wantonness of Pride, or Lust of Pre-eminence? Does Virtue destroy Millions of Lives, only to aggrandize a particular People, or extend the Dominion of some favourite Empire? If *this* were Virtue, *Brutus* thought too honourably of her Character, when he termed her an *empty Name.*——I am sure, my *Theron* has juster Notions of Things. He need not be informed, that true Virtue, far from personating the rapacious Harpy, acts as a Father to Others, as a Father to All. And, like HIM, who is both its Pattern and its Author, *goes about doing Good.*

† A Zeal for the Honour of GOD, and a Concern for the Good of our Fellow-creatures, are the true Sources of Virtue, 1 *Cor.* x. 24, 31. When our Actions flow not from these Principles, Reason will put a *Query* upon them, and Revelation will *expunge* them from the List of Virtues.——They may be specious in themselves; they may be costly to the Performer; they may even be serviceable to others. But can no more deserve the Title of *Virtue*, than the Activity of our Sun-fire Officers, in extinguishing the Flames on some insured House, can merit the Name of *Charity*.

Ther. The moſt elegant Cane, if plunged into yonder Baſon, while the Waters are curled by the Breeze, will appear both crooked and coarſe. I cannot but think, the Accuſers of human Nature examine her State with a *prejudiced* Underſtanding; which has the ſame perverſe Effect upon their Judgment, as thoſe ruffled Waves have upon the Sight. —Or elſe, they contemplate her Condition with a *melancholy* Mind; which, like a jaundiced Eye, gives every Object a diſtempered Aſpect; darkens the chearful; diſcolours the beautiful; and hangs even the Sun in Mourning.

Aſp. Rather let this be the Compariſon, to illuſtrate our Point.—View the meaneſt Piece of Earth, through the *Priſmatic* Glaſs: and it will appear, not beautiful only, but perfectly ſplendid. Remove the deluſory Medium, and all the ſophiſticated Finery vaniſhes. The Indigo, the Orange, the Violet are gone: and leave nothing to be ſeen, but a rude unornamented Lump of Clay.—So, if We conſider human Nature, according to the *partial* Repreſentations of Self-love; or contemplate it, in the *flattering* Mirror of ſome popular Writings; it may ſeem regular, holy, excellent. But, if We behold it under the Light, the unerring Light of Revelation, its fanſied Charms diſappear; it ſtands clothed with Deformity; and is a Spectacle of Commiſeration, if not of Horror.

Ther. What Reaſon have You to father ſuch a Notion upon the ſacred Writings?—The ſacred Writings inform Us, that Man was made *after the Image of GOD*. This, ſure, could not be ſo diſhonourable and depraved a Pattern, as your Diſcourſe would inſinuate.

Aſp. Far, very far from a diſhonourable Pattern! The Image of GOD is the *conſummate Standard* of all Perfection.—In conformity to this admirable Exemplar, our firſt Parents were created; and in this admirable Condition they continued, till by Tranſgreſſion they *fell*. Fell from the moſt holy and happy State, into Guilt, Condemnation and Ruin.—Therefore,

fore, when this fatal Cataſtrophe had taken place, the ſacred Hiſtorian varies his Style; and with a remarkable Peculiarity, as well as Propriety of Speech, ſays, *Adam begat a Son in his own* *, not in the DIVINE, *Likeneſs*. That every Reader may advert to this melancholy, but important Truth; it is marked more ſtrongly ſtill; it is inforced by a very emphatical Repetition. *After his own Image* †, *Moſes* adds; as contradiſtinguiſhed to the Image of GOD, mentioned in a preceding Verſe. Which Expreſſions are evidently intended, to denote the Difference between the State, in which *Adam* was created, and *Seth* was begotten.

Ther. Pray, let me have a ſuccinct, but full Account of this tragical Story. Since all your orthodox Divines lay ſuch a mighty Streſs upon the Doctrine of the *Fall*.

Aſp. GOD, having formed the human Body out of the Ground, animated the Structure with a living Soul; and tranſcribed upon this Soul the Image of his bleſſed SELF. All was Light in the Underſtanding; all was Rectitude in the Will; and nothing but Harmony in the Affections.——Man, thus endowed, was placed in the delightful Garden of *Eden*; and furniſhed with every Accommodation, which was neceſſary to ſupport his Being, or deſirable to gratify his Senſes.—He was conſtituted Lord of this lower Creation; and, amidſt numberleſs Indulgencies, received only *one—eaſy—negative* Command—*not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* ——From this He was to abſtain, as a Pledge of his Subjection, and as an Exerciſe of his Obedience. Bliſs and Immortality were to be the Reward of Duty; Miſery and Death the Punithment of Diſobedience. *In the Day Thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die* ‡, was the Sanction of the divine Law.

How

* This is affirmed, not of *Cain*, but of *Seth*, the moſt excellent of *Adam*'s Children, and Father of the holy Seed.

† בדמותו כצלמו Gen. v. 3. *Corruptus corruptum.*

‡ Gen. ii. 17.

How equitable! How gracious the Terms! Yet, neither the Goodneſs of GOD, could induce Him to keep them; nor the Authority of GOD, deter Him from breaking them.——Unreaſonably diſcontented even with ſuch advantageous Circumſtances, and preſumptuouſly aſpiring to be like the MOST HIGH, He hearkened to the Suggeſtions of the evil Spirit.—In a Word; He violated the Precept, and incurred the Penalty. God was juſt, and Man was undone. He loſt his Uprightneſs †; became ſubject to Mortality; and, as the nervous Original expreſſes it, *Died the Death.*

Ther. True; He became ſubject to many bodily Infirmities, and to the Neceſſity of final Diſſolution.—But, what has this Sentence, or what have theſe Sufferings to do with *your* Notion of univerſal Depravity in the Mind? The Death, which the Almighty LEGISLATOR threatened, can be oppoſed only to the Life, which the Almighty CREATOR gave.

Aſp. Be it ſo.—The CREATOR gave, and Man poſſeſſed a Life incomparably more excellent, than that which the Pulſe imparts, or the Beaſts enjoy. He poſſeſſed a *divine Life*; which, according to the Definition of the Apoſtle, conſiſted *in Knowlege, in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs* *. This—which was the diſtinguiſhing Glory, and the ſupreme Felicity of his Nature—this, alas! was extinct.

His Underſtanding, originally inlightened with Wiſdom, was clouded and overwhelmed with Ignorance.——His Heart, once filled with religious Veneration, and warmed with heavenly Love, became alienated from GOD his MAKER.—His Paſſions and Appetites, inſtead of moving on, in orderly Array, according to the beauteous Meaſures of Truth and Duty, grew mutinous; ſhook off the Government of Reaſon; and ran wild into the moſt lawleſs Extravagancies.

† ——————*Innocence, that as a Veil*
Had ſhadow'd them from knowing Ill, was gone,
Juſt Confidence, and native Righteouſneſs.
MILT. Book IX. 1054.

* Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.

cies.——In a Word; the whole moral Frame was unhinged, disjointed, broken.

Ther. What Cause have You to suppose, that all this Misery was either included in the threatning, or introduced by the Fall?

Asp. The *Ignorance* of fallen *Adam* was palpable. Witness that absurd Attempt, to hide Himself from the Eye of OMNISCIENCE, among the Trees of the Garden.—His *Aversion* to the All-gracious GOD was equally plain. Otherwise, He would never have fled from his MAKER; but rather have hasted, and on the Wings of Desire, into the Place of the divine Manifestation.

A strange Variety of *disorderly Passions* †, were evidently predominant in his Breast.—*Pride*; for He refuses to acknowledge his Guilt, though he cannot but own the Fact—*Ingratitude*; for He obliquely upbraids the CREATOR with his Gift, as though it had been a Snare, rather than a Blessing: *The Woman, whom* Thou *gavest me* ——*Want of natural Affection*; for, He endeavours to cast all the Blame upon the weaker Vessel; and to acquit his obnoxious Self, by impeaching the Wife of his Bosom——The female Criminal acts the same unhumbled Part: neither takes Shame to Herself; nor gives Glory to GOD; nor puts up a single Petition for Pardon.

As all these Disasters ensued, upon the breach of the Commandment; they furnish Us, I think, with the best *Key* to open the Meaning of the prohibitory Sanction.

† *Milton*, speaking of the unhappy Pair, and describing the Consequences of their Fall, says;

——*Nor only Tears*
Rain'd at their Eyes; but high Winds within
Began to rise; high Passions, Anger, Hate,
Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore
Their inward State of Mind; calm Region once,
And full of Peace; now tost and turbulent!
For, Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her Lore! But, in Subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping, over sovereign Reason clam'd
Superior Sway.

Book IX. 1121.

Sanction. They prove, beyond any Argument, that ſpiritual Death, and all its Conſequences, were comprehended in the Extent of the Threatning.

Ther. How could *one* Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects? Eraſe the fair Image of the GODHEAD; and ſtamp the Monſter, ſtamp the very Devil, in its Stead?—And ſo *ſmall* an Act of Diſobedience too!

Aſp. The *Prohibition*, if You pleaſe, was ſmall; not ſo the Tranſgreſſion! It was committed againſt the cleareſt Knowledge of Duty, and the ſtrongeſt Obligations to Obedience. It argued Ingratitude for the richeſt Favours, and Unbelief of the moſt ſolemn Declarations. It was an Act of the moſt horrid Preſumption in the Creature, and of the moſt impious Rebellion againſt the CREATOR.

As to the ſmallneſs, or rather the *gentle* and *benign* Import of the Command, this aggravates beyond meaſure, the Crime of Diſobedience. Alluding to the Words, once addreſſed to the *Syrian* General, we may juſtly expoſtulate—"O thou *Adam*, if thy LORD "had bid Thee do ſome great thing*; in Submiſ- "ſion to his high Authority, and out of Gratitude "for his unſpeakable Goodneſs, oughteſt Thou not "to have done it? How much more, when He ſays "to Thee—Freely eat of all, except this ſingle Tree. "*Thouſands*, *Thouſands* of Honours, Privileges, and "Gifts be thine; only *one* Acknowledgment of "thy Subjection, mine. And that the *eaſieſt*, "which thy Heart can wiſh, or even thy Fancy "conceive."

You aſk, how could one Act of Diſobedience produce ſuch deſtructive Effects?—I anſwer; The *Reality* of the Fact, in numberleſs Inſtances of material Nature, is plain to a Demonſtration; while the *Manner* of Operation, remains an impenetrable Secret. Every Child perceives the former; *Newton* himſelf is at a loſs for the latter.—For which Reaſon, I have always thought it better, to believe what GOD has taught, than attempt to explain, what GOD has concealed.

* 2 Kings v. 13.

concealed. Let us forego this curious, perhaps fruitleſs Inquiry; and ſubſtitute a remark, which naturally ariſes from the Subject, and may conſiderably edify our Minds.

Ther. Edify! Is it poſſible to render this diſhonourrable and afflictive Notion *edifying?* Can any generous Fruit ſpring from ſuch a penurious Soil?

Aſp. Samſon, I believe, had no Expectation of finding any Thing valuable, in the Reliques of his ſlain Lion. But, to his agreeable Diſappointment, *there was Honey in the Carcaſe* †. If our Doctrine appear *ghaſtly* as the One, it may yield a Benefit *ſweet* as the Other.

From hence We may learn (what, when rightly learnt, is more ſerviceable than all the Sciences) the *extreme Malignity* of Sin.—When *Volcanos* open their tremendous Jaws, and diſgorge a fiery Inundation; they confine their Fury to a ſingle Territory.—When *Famine* lifts her mildewed Hand, and deſtroys the Supports of animal Life; She is content with ruining a Kingdom or a Nation.—When *War* drenches his Sword in Blood, or *Peſtilence* impregnates the Air with Poiſon; they alſo, even they obſerve ſome Limits, and never make the whole Compaſs of Nature the Scene of their Ravages.—But *Sin* leveled its blow at the whole human Race. Sin poured Contagion, and ſpread Deſtruction, through *all* Countries and *all* Ages. One *ſingle* Act of ſin brought Confuſion and a Curſe upon the material, and Miſeries, *infinite Millions* of Miſeries, on the rational World ‡.——How then ſhould We fear this *moſt pernicious* of all Evils! With what Careſulneſs guard againſt its inſidious Allurements! With what Reſolution fly from its killing Careſſes?

Ther.

† Judg. xiv. 8.

‡ St. *Chryſoſtom* calls the firſt Tranſgreſſion, ἡ πανλα λυμαινομενη οικουμενη. Which is, in a Manner; tranſlated by *Milton*, who, ſpeaking of the ſame tragical Act, ſays

——*It*
Brought Death into the World, and all our Woe.

Ther. I must observe, that You take for granted what remains to be proved. For, supposing your Account true, with regard to *Adam*; yet, how does this affect his Children? Why must all his Posterity be contaminated, because their Forefather has played the Prodigal? Such a heavy Charge against the whole Body of Mankind will not be admitted, without very cogent Proofs.

Asp. The Proofs are cogent; perhaps irrefragable —Reason offers to turn Evidence in the Case. Reason, in Concurrence with Revelation, demands; *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean* *? If the Fountain be polluted, how can the Streams be pure? And if the Root is corrupt, 'tis impossible to conceive, how the Branches should be sound, or the Fruit good †.

The scriptural Testimonies are almost innumerable. They pour their Evidence from every Quarter; and constitute, not two or three only, but a whole Cloud of Witnesses. — *GOD made Man upright*, says the royal Preacher; the human Nature in its primitive State, was without any wrong Bias. But at, and ever since the first Transgression, *they have found out* and followed *many* perverse *Inventions* ‡.

Ther I don't deny, but Multitudes of People, seduced by bad *Example*, or betrayed by their own *Inadvertency*, have departed from the Rule of Duty. Have, as the wise Man affirms, tried many foolish Experiments to acquire Happiness, and devised as many idle Excuses for their Folly. But, this is no such irrefragable Proof, that they were *originally* bad. It

* Job xiv. 4.

† *Milton* has anticipated *Theron*'s Objection; and, in *Adam*'s Soliloquy, very judiciously solved it.

——— Ah! why should all Mankind
For one Man's Fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt, both Body and Mind deprav'd;
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they acquitted stand
In Sight of GOD?

Book X. 822.

‡ Eccles. vii. 29.

It only implies, that, not taking proper heed to their Ways, they warped from their native Uprightneſs. As yonder *Tulips*, though perfectly beautiful at preſent, if not attended with the neceſſary Cultivation, will degenerate into homely Flowers; and at length, be no better than tawdry Weeds.

Aſp. No, my Friend, Iniquity is not an adventitious Thing, catched from Example, or contracted by Careleſneſs. Theſe may increaſe, but theſe do not occaſion, the *moral Malady*. A ſinful Diſpoſition is as early as our Being: the very Mould, in which all our Faculties are caſt.——*David* bears very expreſs Teſtimony to this humbling Truth. *Behold!* He ſets his *N. B.* upon the Paſſage. 'Tis a ſad, but certain Fact. Such as ſhould never depart from my Memory, nor ever be omitted in my Confeſſions; and is much to be regarded by every Reader. *I was ſhapen in Wickedneſs, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* †. As though he had ſaid——"Alas! LORD, this "Crime, though extremely horrid, is but a little "Part of my Guilt. I have not only ſinned in Prac- "tice, but I am totally and univerſally corrupt in my "very Nature."

This He acknowledges, not to extenuate his Offence, but to lay open his exceſſive Vileneſs. And indeed it is not poſſible, to form a *right Judgment* of Ourſelves, or to be *duly humbled* before GOD, unleſs We add the Depravation of our Nature to the Tranſgreſſions of our Life. Juſt as it is impoſſible to diſcern, what monſtrous and voracious Animals lie hid in the Ocean, if We only glance an Eye upon the Surface of the Waters.

Ther This, You know, was written by the royal Penitent, under the Pangs of ſevere Remorſe. Does not a Senſe of his enormous Iniquity, together with the Apprehenſion of Divine Wrath, make his Hand ſhake, and lead Him to *aggravate* Features? — Or, ſuppoſe it were true of the adulterous King, is it equally applicable to Others, who have eſcaped ſuch groſs Pollutions?

Aſp.

† Pſal. li. 5.

Aſp. It is no exaggerating Draught, but a faithful Delineation; and exactly repreſents every Child of *Adam*.—It was written with the utmoſt Deliberation; and therefore is introduced with that Call for peculiar Attention, *Behold!*——And, though *David* was ſcandalouſly criminal in his Intrigue with the Wife of *Uriah*; yet, the *general* Tenour of his Life was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. Who ſo zealous for the Houſe of his GOD, or ſo devoted an Admirer of the divine Word? His Heart was an Altar, ever flaming with heavenly Love; and his Tongue a Trumpet, to ſound the Praiſes of JEHOVAH through all Generations.—And if *He* had Reaſon to make this abaſing Confeſſion; who is the Perſon, that can think Himſelf aggrieved, by ſharing in the Imputation?

One of our moſt eminent Martyrs †, when He heard of any Malefactor, condemned to ſuffer an ignominious Death, uſed to lay his Hand upon his Breaſt, and ſay —" The Seeds of all thoſe Villanies, " which brought that unhappy Wretch to the Gibbet, " were ſown *Here*. And, if they have not ſprung up " into the ſame deteſtable Deeds, unto divine Grace, " unto divine Grace *alone*, be all the Glory!"

Ther. Your Martyrs had honeſt Hearts, but not always the cleareſt Heads. I admire their Zeal, and reverence their Memories: but I can no more receive their Opinion, as an Oracle, than I can be perſuaded to worſhip their Relics.

Aſp. I have no Intention to palm Popery on my Friend, nor any Deſire to calumniate the human Species. If it be diſingenuous and ſinful, to aſperſe a particular Character; how much more unjuſtifiable, to traduce our Nature in general!

My Account, dark and diſguſtful as it is, ſtands confirmed by a higher Authority, than any private Opinion. It is confirmed from an univerſal *Survey* of Mankind; taken by the Eye of the CREATOR Himſelf, and left upon Record in the Books of Revelation.

† Mr. *Bradford*.

velation. *The LORD looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were Any that did understand, and seek after GOD.*—What is the Result of this grand Inquiry? It must, without all Peradventure, be infallibly true. Because GOD's Inspection is too keen, to be eluded; and his Judgment too impartial, to be biassed. This is the Report, made by the infinitely wise OBSERVER: *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy* *; *there is None that doeth Good, no not One.*

Ther. This, I apprehend, is the Character of those besotted Creatures, those most egregious of all Fools, *Who say, There is no GOD.* To them the *Psalm* relates, and to them the abandoned Character is appropriated. They have it, if I may so speak. *Cum Privelegio.*

Asp. It is meant rather of practical, than of speculative Atheists. Who say, not *explicitly* with their Mouths, but *implicitly* in their Hearts, There is no GOD. Who live, as if there was no ALL-SEEING EYE, to take Cognizance of their present Conduct; no Supreme JUDGE, to call them to a future Reckoning.—And I dare appeal to Yourself, though perhaps the fondest of Fathers, Whether this Instance of *Foolishness, is not bound up in the Hearts of our Children* †. Nay, whether it be not natural to Us all, both in Youth and Manhood, to forget our CREATOR. In

* *Psal.* xiv. 2, 3. The two original Words סר נאלחו are metaphorical Expressions; taken from — *Wines*, that are become *sour*—and *Meats*, that are in a State of *Putrefaction*. I believe, it is impossible to find Images, more strongly expressive of a *total* Depravity, and of the utmost Degeneracy.

† *Prov.* xxii. 15. Let None think, that by *Foolishness* the sacred Writer means only these *silly* Tricks, which discover a Weakness of Understanding in Children. *Solomon*'s Fool is not the *Idiot*, but the *Sinner*; and the Folly, stigmatized throughout the Proverbs, denotes, not a Failure in the intellectual, but in the religious and moral Character

The Words, in this Passage, are peculiarly forcible. *Foolishness is in the Heart*; implanted in the very Nature; sunk deep into the inmost Faculties.—And not only sunk deep, but adheres almost inseparably: קשורה is *wrapt*, *tied*, and *bound*: twines like the Ivy, and is rooted like the Oak.

In this Caſe, *Theron*, there is no Monopoly. Your Right and mine, are too ſtrongly eſtabliſhed by Experience, and too clearly expreſſed in the preceding Scripture, to admit of any Controverſy. — If there were *Any*, that underſtood—They are *all* gone out of the Way—There is *None*, that doeth Good—No, not *One*.—Could any Conveyancer in *Europe* have contrived a Form of Words, more fully to aſcertain our unhappy Title?

Ther. There may be ſome Texts in Scripture, which ſeem to countenance your Aſſertion. But theſe refer to the worſt of Men, in the worſt of Times. And can You, with any Juſtice, aſcribe the Properties of a few Reprobates to the whole Species?

Aſp. This very Paſſage, and others of a like Import, are adopted by St. *Paul*, and applied both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; with this profeſſed Deſign, *that* every *Mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World may be found guilty* * *before* GOD. Which evinces, I ſhould think, beyond all Doubt, the *Univerſality* of its Extent.

If to the Univerſality, We add the *Antiquity* of this Fact, it will bear the two grand Characteriſtics of Truth. Far from being a novel Opinion, it was received as a Maxim, in the early Age of *Job*. *What is Man, that He ſhould* pretend to *be clean? And He that is born of a Woman, that He ſhould* preſume to *be righteous?* Righteous before the infinitely JUST and HOLY ONE! *Behold! He putteth no Truſt in his Saints*, though the moſt exalted of all intelligent Beings. *Yea, the Heavens*, thoſe brighteſt Parts of the material Creation, *are not clean in his Sight. How much more abominable and filthy is Man* †? *Who drinketh*

* *Rom.* iii. 19. Ὑποδικος γενηται, "May *become* guilty," does not ſo exactly anſwer the Scope of the Context, neither does it ſo ſolidly eſtabliſh the Apoſtle's Argument, as "may be *found* guilty;" be fully convicted, and apparently liable to moſt juſt Condemnation.—Thoſe Things were written of Old, and were quoted by St. *Paul*, not to *render* Men criminal, but to *prove* them ſo.

† *Job* xv. 14, 15, 16. The immaculate Purity of the bleſſed GOD, and the utter Depravity of fallen Man, are Points of ſo great Importance in the ſcriptural Syſtem of Divinity, that they are inculcated

eth Iniquity; though loathſome to GOD, and worſe than Poiſon to his own Soul; yet drinketh it *like Water*; without any Heſitation or the leaſt Fear, with an eager and profuſe Delight.

This, You will obſerve, was alledged in a Diſpute, carried on with no ſmall Vehemency. Yet is admitted, on all Hands, as unexceptionably true.—Be pleaſed alſo to take Notice, That the Charge is not confined to ſome very notorious Sinners, but is laid againſt the whole Body of Mankind. Whatever Figure they may make, each in his own Conceit; they are all deſcribed in the Word of GOD—as *Beings*, inſatiably athirſt after Evil—from *Objects*, that We cannot endure to behold; or cannot behold without Abhorrence * —*Such* is Man by Nature! People muſt have Eyes very different from mine, to diſcern any *Dignity* in this Draught.

Ther. As to innate Dignity, We will let it paſs. But this I muſt inſiſt upon, and ſeveral Writers of the firſt Repute are on my Side—That we enter the Stage of Life, in a State of *Indifference* either to Good or Evil. —That the Affections are like a Balance, nicely poiſed, and preponderating neither one Way nor the other.—The whole Soul, like a Sheet of fair Paper, is equally ſuſceptible of ſtraight or crooked Lines; and will as readily receive the amiable Features of an Angel, as the hideous Deformity of a Devil.

Aſp. With regard to your firſt Illuſtration.——The Simile, I think, confutes the Sentiment. For, to be *in ſuſpenſe*, whether We ſhall love the LORD our GOD, the Giver of all Good, and the Source of all Perfection; this, ſurely, muſt be condemned as an irreligious Temper.——This is a criminal Halting between GOD and *Baal*——A Neutrality, which is no better than Hoſtility. I fear

inculcated no leſs than *three Times*, within the Compaſs of this ſingle Book And by much the *ſame* noble Contraſt of ſtriking Images. *Chap.* iv. 17, 18.—xv. 14, 15, 16.—xxv. 4, 5, 6.

* The original Words are שקוץ ונאלה —One is uſed to ſignify that *abominable* Practice, which the *Ægyptians* could not bear to ſee. *Exod.* viii. ver 22. *Heb Bib.* ver. 26. *Engl. Bib.*—The other denotes an Object, too *ſqualid* to be viewed without loathing.

I fear, the Writers You mention, pay but little Deference to the inſpired Volume. Our Eſcutcheon is very differently blazoned, in that Office of ſpiritual Heraldry. *A Tranſgreſſor from the Womb* *, is one of our hereditary Titles. Tranſgreſſors We are, by ſtrong internal Propenſity; even before We tranſgreſs, in outward Act.

Obſerve the young *Hawthorn* Plants, which have unfolded their green Leaves, in yonder Nurſery; but have ſcarce learned to ſpread the gay Bloſſom. Is there in thoſe an equal Aptitude, to produce the luſcious juicy Grape, or their own coarſe and huſky Berry? By no means. They will (unleſs grafted with ſome generous Cyon) *certainly, univerſally, conſtantly* bear the ſame harſh Fruit with their parent Tree.——So certainly will the human Mind, if not renewed by the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, branch out into ungodly Tempers, and bring forth wicked Practices.

Ther. The Nobleman, mentioned by *Xenophon* †, when overcome by an alluring Temptation, deviſed for his Excuſe the Notion of two Souls; one, that inclined Him to Vice; another, that prompted Him to Virtue. This was a moderate *Caricatura* § compared with my Friend's. He will allow nothing regular or graceful in the human Heart.——You have metamorphoſed the Maſter-piece of the Creation, into ſuch a deformed Object; as may juſtly render Him a Terror to Himſelf. Can there be a groſſer Libel upon the CREATOR, or a greater Diſcouragement to our Fellow-creatures?

Aſp. If this be a diſtorted Piece, what will You call the following Deſcription? *GOD ſaw that the Wickedneſs*

* *Iſai.* xlviii. 8. A Truth ſo apparent and undeniable, that *Seneca* could not but *diſcern* it, though He was an *uninlightened* Heathen: could not but *acknowledge* it, though He was one of the *proud Stoic* Sect. *Hac Conditione* nati ſumus. *Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus Animi quam Corporis Morbis.* De Ira, Lib. II. c. 9.

† *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.

§ A Term uſed by the *Italian* Painters, to ſignify a Reſemblance *horrid*, or *ridiculous*.

Wickedneſs of Man was great upon the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually *.—This, perhaps, may be reckoned a more monſtrous Drawing ſtill. Yet it came from *that* Hand, which painted the Canopy of the Skies, and touched all the Pictures of Nature into ſuch inimitable Perfection.

Pray, let us examine the moſt diſtinguiſhing Features in this Draught.——Not barely the Works of his Hand, or the Words of his Tongue, but the *Imaginations of his Heart*, are evil. The Contagion has ſpread itſelf through the inner Man. It has tainted the Seat of his Principles, and the Source of his Actions †.---Is there not, You will ſay, ſome Mixture of Good? No; they are *only* Evil. There is no hopeful Tendency. Not ſo much as a little Leaven of Piety; that may have a Chance to diffuſe itſelf, and meliorate the whole Lump.——But are there no lucid Intervals? No happy Moments, when Virtue gains the Aſcendency! None; He is only evil *continually*. The Uſurpation of Sin is total, and its Tyranny perpetual.

What I have advanced, therefore, is no Libel upon the CREATOR's Benignity. Becauſe, it is the very Echo of his own Determination.---Neither is it ſo properly diſcouraging, as humbling and alarming to our Fellow-creatures. *Humbling*, to make Us ſenſible of our Ruin: *Alarming*, to make Us deſirous of a Recovery.

Ther. Is not the Deſcription, which You have produced, peculiar to the Men of that wicked Generation? Whoſe Guilt was as unparallelled, as their Puniſhment?

Aſp. It is applicable both to them and their Succeſſors. The Wiſdom of GOD *repeats* the Charge, and

* Gen. vi. 5.

†The Original is very nice in its Structure, and no leſs emphatical in its Meaning. — לֵב The *Heart*, or grand Principle— מְזִמּוֹת The *Thoughts* of the Heart, or the various Actings of that Principle— יֵצֶר The *Imagination* of the Thoughts, or the Produce and Reſult of thoſe Actings; namely, Deſires and Affections, Counſels and Purpoſes.—Not one, a few only, or the greateſt Part, but *all* theſe are evil.

and fixes it upon the Race, which ſurvived the Flood *. The Depravity of human Nature contiued, nor could the Waters of an univerſal Deluge purge it away. So deep alas! is the Stain, and ſo incorrigible the Virulency, of original Corruption; that it will yield to nothing——to nothing will it yield, but to the *Waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST* †. Till this takes place, every Heart of Man muſt wear the Prophet's ſtigmatizing Motto, *Deceitful above all Things, and deſperately wicked.*

Ther. This Paſſage, I am informed, is not rightly tranſlated; eſpecially, in the *laſt* Expreſſion. The *Hebrew* Original does not bear ſo hard upon the human Character, as the *Engliſh* Verſion.

Aſp. You allow then, that the Heart is *deceitful.* And of this We have a glaring Proof, in the Conduct of *Hazael.* He thought it impoſſible, that He ſhould ever perpetrate ſuch horrid Barbarities, as the Prophet foreſaw. *Is thy Servant a Dog, that He ſhould do this great Thing* §? Yes, *Hazael*; however Thou mayeſt imagine Thyſelf gentle as a Lamb, thou art fierce as a Dog, and ſavage as a Tyger.---Which was moſt terribly demonſtrated by the Event.

Suppoſe, we tranſlate the other Word ſomewhat more accurately. The little Alteration will be of leſs Service to your Cauſe. Inſtead of deſperately wicked, You may, if You pleaſe, read *deplorably diſordered* ‡. This is the exact Import of the Phraſe.---- It is a Metaphor, derived from a very diſtempered Body. In which, the whole Head is ſick, and the whole Heart faint. *From the Crown of* whoſe *Head, to the Sole of* whoſe *Feet*, there is nothing but conſuming

* *Gen.* viii. 21. Where, I think, the Particle כִּי is uſed in the *adverſative*, not the *cauſal* Signification; and ſhould be rendered *though*, rather than *for*.—Where it ſeems likewiſe, that the Forbearance of the righteous GOD, is aſcribed to the great Atonement; typified by *Noah*'s Burnt-offerings, and expreſſed by St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*; who probably alludes to this Paſſage. *The LORD* ſmelled a ſweet Savour, *and the LORD ſaid in his Heart, I will not again curſe the Earth any more for Man's ſake*, though *the Imagination of Man's Heart be evil from his Youth*, Eph. v. 2.

† Tit. iii. 5. § 2 Kings viii. 13. ‡ Jer. xvii. 3. אנש

ſuming Diſeaſe, and enfeebling Languors *.—The Rules of Civility may ſet a ſpecious Varniſh on the Converſation. But until Grace, ſanctifying Grace, adminiſters the Remedy, the moſt civilized Heart will be like the pale emaciated Cheek, that is poorly enlivened with paint.

Ther. What ſay the Writers of the New Teſtament? Is not *their* Way of thinking more liberal and benign?—If human Nature wore ſo *hideous* an Aſpect, under the legal Diſpenſation; ſince the Coming of our LORD, and the Publiſhing of his Goſpel, One may expect an improved and more pleaſing Face of Things.

Aſp. Human Nature in *every* Period of Time, and under every Diſpenſation of Religion, is ſtill the *ſame.* It was the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, who indited the Old Teſtament, and He cannot vary from Himſelf, in the Declarations of the New.

I am very much inclined to believe, That all the *bodily* Diſeaſes, which our Divine PHYSICIAN healed, during his Abode on Earth, were ſo many emblematical Repreſentations of *ſpiritual* Diſorders. Which, like certain Family Diſtempers, may be ſaid to run in the Blood of all Mankind.—Will you give me leave, *Theron*, to explain myſelf? I don't like to engroſs the Diſcourſe. Yet I would willingly inlarge upon this Subject.

Ther. By all means. The Laws of Argument, ſeparate from the Indulgences of Friendſhip, give you a Warrant to urge, whatever may ſupport your Cauſe. —Beſides, I ſhall be glad to hear your Sentiments upon a Point ſo curious.

Aſp. The poor *Leper*, covered with noiſome Sores, is the very Picture of a *polluted Sinner.* Was the One, for his contagious Impurities, ſeparated from the Society of his Fellow-citizens? So ſhall the other, for his abominable Uncleanneſs, be baniſhed from the beatific Preſence:

* *Iſai.* i. 6. Agreeable to this Doctrine, and conſonant to this Metaphor, is the Confeſſion of our Liturgy, *There is no Health in Us.*

ſence : Unleſs He be cleanſed by the Blood, and juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS*.

You pity the Condition of that unhappy Creature, who was born *blind*. His Eyes rolled, but rolled in vain, to find the dawning Ray. Such is the benighted State of the human Mind, till Almighty GOODNESS command the Scales of Ignorance to fall off, and pour heavenly Day through all the intellectual Faculties. Then, and not till then, we begin to ſow the Holineſs, the Juſtice, the adorable Excellencies of GOD.—We ſee the ſublime Purity of his Jenw, and the extreme Depravity of our own Hearts. —We are brought acquainted with the tranſcendent Glories of our REDEEMER's Perſon, and apprehend that moſt comfortable Myſtery of his Subſtitution in our Stead. We diſcern the ineffable Perfection of his Merits, and the divinely rich Freeneſs of his Grace *. Truths incomparably more delightful to the Soul, than all the delectable Scenes of Creation are to the Sight.

The Paralytic's *enervated* Limbs too truly repreſent the Impotence of our Nature. Was He unable to grind at a Mill ; to run in a Race ; or to turn Himſelf on His Bed ? So unable are We to fight the good Fight of Faith ! to exerciſe the Graces of Chriſtianity ; or even to turn Ourſelves unto GOD.—Do not *you*, my Friend, experience ſomething of this Inability ? for *my* Part, I muſt lay my Hand on My Breaſt, and daily, hourly confeſs, " *The Palſy is Here.* Though " not altogether dead in Sin (bleſſed be *CHRIST JE-* " *SUS*, and his quickening SPIRIT!) yet how " languid is my Zeal, how enfeebled my Induſtry, in " the great Affair of everlaſting Salvation !—I would " fain believe, and with a full Aſſurance of Faith, the " Promiſes of the unchangeable JEHOVAH. But " how often do I ſtagger through Unbelief!—I would " fain love, and with the warmeſt Gratitude, my ever-

" merciful

* This, and the preceding Particulars, are Leſſons of the laſt Importance in the *Chriſtian* School. The Knowledge o. them deſerves to be moſt ſolicitouſly ſought, both by attentive Contemplation, and by earneſt Prayer. For to know them, is to be *truly wiſe*; to be influenced by them, is to be *ſubſtantially happy*.

" merciful and moſt beneficent GOD. But Oh! what
" Coldneſs benumbs my Affections!—I wiſh to be
" humble in every Thought: heavenly in all my De-
" ſires; and wholly reſigned to the divine Will. But,
" alas! my Sufficiency for theſe Things, is like the
" *flaccid* Sinew, or the *withered* Arm."

It would be endleſs to particularize all the Maladies, which were Emblems of our Miſery, and the Triumphs of our LORD's Power. Let me only remark—that their Bodies were afflicted with a *ſingle* Diſorder; our Souls labour under a *Complication* of Evils.—They *felt* their Affliction, and were deſirous, importunately deſirous of Relief. We are, till awakened from above, inſenſible of our calamitous Caſe. We add, to all our other Indiſpoſitions, a ſtupifying Lethargy, or an extravagant Delirium.

Ther. Such allegorical Expoſitions of Scripture are pretty enough. But, I preſume, You yourſelf cannot reckon them *demonſtrative*. For my own Part, I muſt appeal from the Surmiſes of Fancy to the Verdict of Reaſon.

Aſp. I cannot think that the allegorical Senſe, when *ſoberly* introduced, is unworthy our Regard, or without its Weight. However, I have no Deſign to preclude your Appeal. Will the avowed, will the reiterated Deciſion of an Apoſtle, ſatisfy my Friend, and be admitted as the Verdict of Reaſon? St. *Paul* has declared of Himſelf; *in me, that is, in my Fleſh*, or unrenewed Nature, *dwelleth no Good* *; no good Temper, nor ſo much as any good Deſire—Elſewhere he affirms; That *the Carnal Mind*, or unregenerate Soul, *is not ſubject to the Law of GOD*. Nay, is an Enemy, or rather *Enmity* itſelf †——againſt what?—Againſt Sin?---That were a noble Antipathy.---Againſt the World? That were a laudable Diſaffection.—No; but againſt G O D and his Law. Amazing Perverſeneſs! To be Enmity againſt G O D; who is boundleſs Benignity, and conſummate Goodneſs. Enmity againſt his Law; which is the Tranſcript of his amiable Perfections, and the faultleſs Model of all Virtue.

* Rom. vii. 18. † Rom. viii. 7.

Ther. This, I ſuppoſe, is the Character of *Saul* the *Phariſee*, not of *Paul* the Apoſtle Deſcriptive of his Condition, when he was "a Blaſphemer, a Perſecutor, "and injurious."

Aſp. It relates not to Himſelf alone, but is applicable to All, who continue in a State of Nature.—The bleſſed AUTHOR of our Being, ſpeaking of Mankind in general, ſays; That *He is even Fleſh* *: mere Fleſh, altogether Fleſh, his very Soul, and all its Powers, are wholly inſlaved to fleſhly Appetites.---The beneficent RESTORER of our Happineſs, pronounces the ſame Sentence, in the very ſame Words: *That which is born of the Fleſh, is Fleſh* †: The Faculties, which Men receive by their natural Birth, have a carnal Bias; incline to nothing, but ſordid Pleaſures, and ignoble Purſuits.---Our SAVIOUR reinculcates the Admonition, and illuſtrates it by a very remarkable Alluſion. You cannot forget his Anſwer to a procraſtinating Diſciple; *Let the Dead bury their Dead* ‡: Intimating, that as many as are unſanctified by the HOLY GHOST, though poſſeſſed of an animal, are deſtitute of the divine Life: are no more fit for the Kingdom of Heaven, for its Converſe or its Joys, than a pale Corpſe in the Coffin, or dry Bones in the Charnel houſe, are qualified to tranſact any ſecular Buſineſs.

St. *Paul* ſets the Seal of Heaven, to this momentous Truth, in various Paſſages of his Epiſtles. From a Multitude let me ſelect one, and recommend it to your ſerious Conſideration. *You, that were ſometime alienated,*

* *Gen.* vi. 3. The Word *Fleſh*, by which the All-wiſe CREATOR characterizes Man, ſignifies, in the ſacred Writings, whatever is *diſhonourable* in itſelf; *provoking* to GOD; or introductory to the *Ruin* of Man—The *Works of the Fleſh*, are a Compendium of all Iniquity. *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21. To *walk after the Fleſh*, is the very Reverſe of walking in the SPIRIT; diametrically oppoſite to the divine Law and true Holineſs, *Rom.* viii 4.—To be *carnally minded*, or to have the Influence, the Savour, the Reliſh of the Fleſh (φρονημα σαρκος) predominant in our Minds, is the ſpiritual Death of the Soul; and a Preſage of eternal Death, both in Body and Soul, *Rom.* viii. 6.

† John iii. 6. ‡ Matt. viii. 22.

alienated, and Enemies: the *Coloſſians*, and all Mankind were alienated from the living GOD; had no true Knowledge of Him; and, what is worſe, had no ſincere Deſire after Him. Nay; they were not only Strangers but Enemies; in a State of Hoſtility to his holy Nature and heavenly Will.---What can expreſs a greater Degeneracy? Nothing, unleſs it be the following Clauſe: *by a Mind intent upon wicked Works* *. A Mind not only averſe to all Good, but paſſionately prone to all Evil.

Ther. A few picked Paſſages, of a figurative Import, and artfully cogged by ſome dextrous Interpretation, may ſeem to ſupport your Cauſe.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, there is no need to uſe Sleight of Hand. He that runs, may read this Doctrine in the ſacred Authors. It is interwoven with the whole Series of their *hiſtorical*, and makes a profeſſed Part of their *practical* Writings.

What is more common with the inſpired Penmen, than to expreſs a profligate Courſe of Life, *by following our own Imagination, and walking in our own Ways?* When Immorality and Licentiouſneſs were predominant in *Iſrael*; knew no Reſtraints, and kept no Bounds; how does the unerring Hiſtorian deſcribe this horrible State of Things? *Every One did that which was right in his own Eyes* †. Nothing can more ſtrongly imply the extreme Depravity of Mankind, than ſuch a Phraſeology. Which makes it one and the ſame Thing, to purſue our natural Inclinations, and to act the abandoned Sinner.

St. *Jude* cannot write a few Lines, but He muſt touch upon this Subject; muſt teach this humbling

* *Coloſſ.* i. 21. Τη διανοια εν τοις εργοις τοις πονηροις *Mente malis Operibus intenta.* An eminent Critic would thus point, and thus tranſlate the Words. And aſſigns, for his Alteration, the following Reaſon; *Mens enim dicitur* eſſe in *ea Re, quam ſemper cogitat, ad quam Cupidine fertur & inclinatur.* DAVENANT in loc. —Let the Words be pointed and tranſlated, either in *this* or the *received* Manner, they ſpeak the Language, and confirm the Sentiments, of this whole Dialogue.

† Judg. xvii. 6.—*See alſo* Pſal. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xi. 9. Acts xiv. 16.

Leſſon. *Senſual* *, He ſays, *not having the SPIRIT.* According to *his* Eſtimate, not to be actuated by the Power of eſpecial Grace, is to remain under the Dominion of Senſuality. If We may credit this Servant of *CHRIST*, *every* Man, while unrenewed by the Divine SPIRIT, is governed by Fleſh and Senſe. Can *any* Man then pretend to be originally free from the Influence of Corruption?

St. *Paul* exempts not Himſelf, no, nor any of the higheſt Saints, from the opprobrious Charge: *We all walked according to the Deſires of the Fleſh and of the Mind.* Which Deſires in *Us*, as well as in the idolatrous *Heathens*, were baſe, ſordid, and contaminating. Inſomuch that We, who are *Jews* by Birth; who are Sons of GOD by our new Birth; even We were *by Nature the Children of Wrath* †. And if liable to Wrath; then, doubtleſs, ſubject to Depravity, and chargeable with Sin.

Ther. What ſays St. *James*? You have ſuppreſſed, and I had almoſt forgot, his Teſtimony; though it is ſo very pertinent to my Purpoſe, and ſo very explicit in my Favour. *Men, who are made after the Similitude of GOD.*---The Similitude of GOD ſignifies, in the ſacred Books, thoſe Moral Endowments, which diſtinguiſh the Poſſeſſor both from the Brute and the Devil. And if Men are made after this Image; if they are created with theſe Endowments; *where* is your Doctrine of original Sin?

Aſp. I began to flatter myſelf, that your Objections were exhauſted. But, ſince I am miſtaken in this Particular, ſurely it muſt be as great a Miſtake to imagine, that our Apoſtle would maintain an Opinion, ſo repugnant to the afore-mentioned Texts, and ſo contrary to univerſal Obſervation.---Do not You perceive the very Reverſe

* *Jude* 19. The original Expreſſion is ΨΥΧΙΚΟΙ, and denotes Perſons, who have no higher a Principle, than the *animal* Life, and the *rational* ſoul.

† *Eph.* ii. 3. *Hoc uno Loco*, ſays BEZA, *quaſi Fulmine, totus Homo, quantus quantus eſt, proſternitur. Neque enim Naturam dicit* læſam, *ſed* mortuam, *per Peccatum*; *ideoque* Iræ *obnoxiam.*

Reverſe true, with regard to your own *Children?* Why do You addreſs them with ſuch tender Intreaties; ſuch warm Exhortations; ſuch repeated Arguments? Why do you allure them to Duty by Promiſes, and deter them from Tranſgreſſion by Threatnings? Is all this Regimen, all this Diſcipline, neceſſary for Creatures that bear the holy Image of GOD.

They *made after the Similitude of GOD!*—Then they have no Need of the *renewing* Influences of the HOLY GHOST, in caſe they live; and no Need of the *Atonement* of *CHRIST*'s Blood, in caſe they die. Would *James* the LORD's Brother aſſert ſuch an egregious Error; as not only oppoſes a ſingle Article, but undermines the whole Conſtitution of Chriſtianity? Sets aſide the Sanctification of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Propitiation of the REDEEMER's Death?---Impoſſible for Him to aſſert! Impoſſible, I ſhould think, for Us to ſuppoſe.

St. *James* ſpeaks of a Fact that is *paſt:* ſpeaks of Men *collectively*, as they were all included in their firſt Parent. The Paſſage, I apprehend, ſhould be tranſlated, not, Men that *are*, but, Men that *were* * created, *&c.*—The Scripture conſiders *Adam*; as the common Parent of Us all: nay more, conſiders Us all as exiſting in our great Progenitor. Which is ſo far from overthrowing, that it eſtabliſhes, the Point in Debate. For, if We were all created after the Similitude of GOD, in and with *Adam*; it muſt follow, that We all fell from our Conformity to GOD, in and with *Adam*. And if ſo—let me for once retort my Friend's Interrogatory—Where is *not* orginal Sin?

I am very ſure, it runs through our *Liturgy*; is an eſſential Part of our *Articles*; and moſt ſtrongly delineated in our *Homilies*. Shall I produce ſome of thoſe Teſtimonies; which are as clear, as they are copious?

* *Jam.* iii. 9. That this is the preciſe Signification of the Participle γεγονοτας, may be gathered from 1 *Tim.* v. 9. Where γεγονυια is tranſlated *having been*; and muſt neceſſarily refer, not to the *preſent*, but to the paſt Condition of the Widow.

Ther. No more of your Teſtimonies, good *Aſpaſio*. Inform me rather, what *Advantage* can accrue from your inculcating, or my adopting ſuch a Doctrine. Suppoſe, it were undeniably true; diſagreeable Truths, like diſagreeable Objects, ſhould be conſigned over to Obſcurity, not obtruded upon our View. ---On ſuch an Occaſion, the Reply of *Themiſtocles* ſhould be mine. One of the *Literati* of *Greece*, offered to communicate an elaborate and curious Invention; by means of which, his Memory ſhould be ſo wonderfully ſtrengthened, as to retain whatever He read or heard. "My Friend, replied the Hero, You quite "miſtake the Way to ſerve me. I want to learn the "the Art, not of *remembring*, but of *forgetting*."

Aſp. If to forget our Diſeaſe, were a likely Method to *reſtore* our Health, I ſhould readily concur in your Hero's way of Thinking. As this will hardly be allowed, I cannot but judge it more adviſeable, to remember our Diſeaſe, that We may inquire after a Remedy.

Ther. Where is this Remedy to be had?

Aſp. Not on Earth, but from Heaven.---The Schools of Science cannot diſcover it. The Courts of Kings are unable to procure it. The College of Phyſicians know not how to preſcribe it. But the Goſpel of our Salvation preſcribes, prepares, and diſpenſes it. The Language of *CHRIST* in his holy Word is, *I will bring Her Health and Cure* *. And the Beginning of our Cure is, to be ſenſible of our Diſorder.

Hence We are taught to be humble.---To review the Catalogue of our actual Tranſgreſſions, is a mortifying Employ. But that which lays the Soul in the loweſt Abaſement, is the Conviction of *inbred* Iniquity. This ſtrikes at the Root of human Vanity, and cuts aſunder the very Sinews of Self-conceit. Blindneſs in the Underſtanding; Impotency in the Will; Diſorder in the Affections; theſe are not *Viſitants*, but † *Inhabitants*; congenial with our Frame and ingrained in our

* Jer. xxxiii. 6.

† Called therefore η οικουσα εν εμοι αμαρτια, *Sin that dwelleth in me*, Rom. vii. 17.

our Conſtitution. How then—O! how can *We* be vain of our moral Beauty, who have an hereditary Defilement cleaving to all our Faculties? Surely, this muſt baniſh the *Phariſee* from our Breaſt, and inſpire us with the Sentiments of that ſincere Penitent, *Behold! I am vile* *! Muſt teach Us the Language of the abaſhed Leper, *Unclean! Unclean* †!

Ther. I ſhould think, it would make Us *melancholy*, rather than humble. Serve no other Purpoſe, than to introduce an afflictive Senſe of extreme Wretchedneſs.

Aſp. Did We intend to reſt Here, your Apprehenſions would be juſt. But We urge the Doctrine of original Corruption, as a *Preparative* for the Redemption of *CHRIST*.

It is obſerveable, that very Few applied to the bleſſed *JESUS* in the Days of his Fleſh, but the Sons and Daughters of Affliction. The Levee of that PRINCE of Peace, was crouded by the Lame, the Blind, the Diſeaſed. Theſe, being ſenſible of Diſtreſs, and longing for Relief, fell as humble Supplicants at his Feet. While Others, who were firm in their Health, and gay in their Spirits, rejected Him with contemptuous Scorn.—When We perceive "the "Plague of our Heart," and feel thoſe worſe than ulcerous Sores, which overſpread our Nature; We alſo ſhall ardently ſeek to *the LORD our Healer*. When we find Ourſelves ſubject to the Curſe of the Law, in Bondage to the Tyranny of Satan, and liable to everlaſting Damnation; *then* the Divine PHYSICIAN, and the Divine REDEEMER will be precious indeed.—Whereas, if We remain inſenſible of our miſery, the Goſpel, which is *ſaving Health* to the contrite Soul, will be an unaffecting Story to our Ears. We may hear it, We may read it, as an amuſing Narrative; but ſhall not *receive* it, as a ſovereign Remedy.

Ther. Not receive the Goſpel, *Aſpaſio*! I hardly underſtand what You mean. I often ſtudy the Goſpel; I believe it to be a divine Revelation; and endeavour to follow its Directions.—I look upon it, as containing the moſt refined Syſtem of Morality; as inforcing

* Job. xl. 4. † Lev. xiii. 45.

every Virtue, by the ſtrongeſt Motives; and recommending all, by the moſt perfect Example.

Aſp. To which You ſhould add—as revealing that great MEDIATOR, who has fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, to effect our Juſtification; who has alſo the Fulneſs of the SPIRIT, to accompliſh our Regeneration. Otherwiſe, what You mention, is infinitely ſhort of the *Goſpel*.—It brings no glad Tiding to fallen Creatures. It adminiſters no Succour to ruined Sinners. It is like writing a Copy for the Blind, or ſetting a Taſk to the diſabled. Which would rather be an Inſult on their Impotence, than a Relief of their Diſtreſs

The firſt Particular I wave at preſent. Only let me aſk your Opinion of the laſt; which is a grand Doctrine, and a very diſtinguiſhing Privilege of the Goſpel. I mean the Doctrine and the Privilege of *ſpiritual Regeneration*. Excluſive of which, all your Endeavours to poſſeſs Virtue and practiſe Morality, will be no better than Endeavours, to fly without Wings, or to run without Feet.

While unimpreſſed with a Senſe of our original Depravity, We ſhall probably ſit down contented with ſome *ſuperficial* Reformation, and not aſpire after a Renewal of the Heart. *Civility* will paſs for Sanctity, and a *temperate* Diſpoſition for a gracious Habit.—Why is the New Birth, why are all the ſaving Operations of the bleſſed SPIRIT, diſregarded by ſome, derided by Others? Becauſe, theſe Perſons are inſenſible of their utter Inability to all Good, and of their abject Slavery to all Evil. Therefore, they ſee no Reaſon for *this* divine Agency, or for *that* univerſal Change.

You alſo, my dear Friend, while unacquainted with your natural Corruption, cannot apprehend either the Reaſonableneſs or the Neceſſity, of being *renewed in the Spirit of your Mind* *. But when Experience has taught You the former, You will want two Arguments to convince you of the latter.—Can Creatures, who are blind in their Underſtandings, diſcern the Things which belong to their eternal Peace?—Can Creatures,

* Eph. iv. 23.

Creatures, who are *dead* in Sin, exercise the Graces, or discharge the Duties of a Christian Life?—Can Creatures, whose Hearts are at *Enmity* against GOD, either delight to do his Will Here, or be meet for his beatific Presence Hereafter?

Under the Influence of such Convictions, that New Birth, which the Gospel of *CHRIST* promises, which the SPIRIT of GOD produces, will appear as necessary for your State, and be as welcome to your Soul, as these gentle *Dews* are necessary for the languishing Herbs, and welcome to the thirsty Soil.

Ther. The Dews, though refreshing to the Flowers, may be too chilly for our Constitutions. And see! The Star of Evening, by proclaiming the Approach of Night, has given Us a Warning to quit our Arbour. Some other Time We must resume this Inquiry. For I am by no means satisfied, that your Theory agrees with Experience.

Asp. I fear, I have already kept You out too long. Let me just observe, as We go in—That the Doctrine, however disagreeable in itself, is conducted to an *advantageous* Issue. It is productive of a much more substantial Consolation, than History assigns to the great, but exiled *Marius*. When he fled, with his ruined Circumstances, to linger out the poor Remains of Life among the Ruins of *Carthage*, what was his chief Support? "Contemplating, says my Author, that "famous City in the Dust, He was the less Afflicted "with his own Downfal *."

We have not been put off with such cold Comforts, such *negative* Benefits. The Belief of original Sin has a Tendency—To make Us *humble*—To shew us our *Need* of *CHRIST*—To create in Us a Hunger and Thirst after the *renewing* Influences of his SPIRIT, and the justifying Merit of his Righteousness.—So that it must be owing to our own Perverseness, or our own Negligence, if we do not levy a *Tax* upon our *Loss*, and *rise* even by our *Fall*.

DIALOGUE

* *Inopem Vitam in Tugurio Ruinarum Carthaginiensium toleravit: cum Marius aspiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens Marium, alter alteri possent esse Solatio.* VEL. PATERC.

DIALOGUE XII.

THE Sun was fiercely bright, and the Sky without a Cloud. — Not a Breath fanned the Woods; not a Gale curled the Stream.—The Fields, expoſed to all the fiery Beams, were like a glowing Hearth.—The little Birds, overcome by the potent Influence, loſt for a while their tuneful Notes. Nothing was heard in the Garden, but the drowſy Hum of Bees, and the Moan-like Buz of winged Inſects.—All Nature ſeemed to *languiſh*. The flouriſhing Meads looked ſickly; the gayeſt Bloſſoms began to fade; the ſprightlieſt Animals, if not repoſed under ſome cooling Shelter, panted for Breath, and hung their drooping Heads, amidſt the all-ſurrounding Blaze and the unſufferable Heat.

Aſpaſio diſappeared ever ſince Dinner, and none could tell, whither He was gone.—*Theron*, as ſoon as the Tea-Equipage was removed, took his Way to the *Wood*. Deſirous of the thickeſt Shade, He haſtened to the Center. A ſerpentine Walk compoſed the Avenue; which, after ſeveral Windings, delivered Him into a large circular Area: not covered with a *Grecian* or *Roman* Temple, unmeaning Imitation of Pagan Idolatry: but ſurrounded with aged and princely Oaks. The Coalition of whoſe Branches, threw over the graſſy Plat a majeſtic rural Dome; and their unpierced Foliage, *imbrowned the Noon-tide Hours*.

In the Midſt, and elevated on a ſquare Baſe, was a Statue repreſenting the venerable *Elijah*—on his bended Knees—with Hands ſtretched out, and Eyes lifted up to Heaven. His Attitude, his Air, his every Feature, were a moſt lively Comment on thoſe ſtrong energetic Expreſſions of Scripture; *take hold on GOD* *; *wreſtle with the ALMIGHTY* †; *pour out your Hearts*

* Iſai. lxiv. 7.

† *Coloſſ.* iv. 12. Αγωνιζομενος εν ταις προσευχαις.

Hearts before HIM *———On one Side of the Pedeſtal were engraven the Prieſts of *Baal*; in frantic Emotions calling upon their ſenſeleſs Deity, and gaſhing themſelves with unavailing Wounds.———On the other was exhibited, in Baſſo relievo, the adoring *Tiſhbite*'s Altar; his Victim burning with Fire from the LORD, even while the Water ran from every Limb, and overflowed the Trench below.

A remote Caſcade tumbled from a craggy Rock. The Stream, after having waſted its ſilver Foam in a winding Progreſs, ſtraggled into this grand Arbour. Here, it juſt appeared, gliding down a gentle Slope, with a flaunting Air, and a prattling Noiſe. Impreſſed, as it were, with the unexpected *Solemnity* of the Scene, it ſeemed to check its wanton Waves, and turned aſide into a more ſequeſtered Path. As ſome *heedleſs* Trifler, who bolts unawares into the royal Preſence, ſtands ſtruck with Reverence and Awe, or retires with Precipitance and Confuſion.

The deep Gloom, ſhedding a Kind of Night, even while the Sun glared in the Sky——Not a Whiſper ſtirring, among ſo many Millions of Leaves; and all their warbling Natives huſhed in Silence——The ſonorous *Toll* of the diſtant Caſcade, and the tinkling *Chime* of the nearer Rill——The profound Adoration, and fervent Devotion, which lived in the Lineaments of the impaſſioned Stone———All theſe Circumſtances rendered the Place prodigiouſly auguſt and ſtriking. Not much unlike the antient *Oratories* †; where holy People retired from the giddy

* Pſal. lxii. 8.

† It is thought by ſome eminent Critics, that, when our LORD continued all Night προσευχη Θεȣ, Luke vi. 12. the Phraſe denotes his Continuance in an *Oratory*; a Place ſet apart for Prayer, and a devout Intercourſe with GOD.

That there were Places of this Kind among the *Jews*, is indiſputable; and that the Opinion is ingenious, cannot be denied. But I very much doubt, whether it gives Us the true Meaning of the Evangeliſt———Having mentioned *a Mountain*, it would hardly ſuit his conciſe Manner, to be more particular with regard to

dy Ring, and the buſtling Croud, to ennoble their Minds, with ſublime Contemplation. Where, they bid a temporary Adieu to the tumultuous World, its gay Impertinence and ſolemn Dulneſs; in order to maintain a more uninterrupted Communion with that Mighty BEING, who *ſitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſhoppers* before HIM *.

Welcome to *Theron*, was the ſhady Bower; welcome the cool Aſpect, and the muſical Flow of the Water; but more welcome than all, was the Sight of his Friend. Who lay inclined at the Foot of an Oak; with a Book half open in his Hand, and his Eye fixed upon the Statue.

Ther. I know not, *Aſpaſio*, whether I muſt make an Apology, for breaking in upon your Retirement; or call You to an Account, for depriving the Ladies of your Company at the Tea-table.

Aſp.

to the Place; neither was the Circumſtance ſo important, as to deſerve a ſecond Mention.—I am apt to think alſo, that *ſuch a Place* would have defeated the Deſign of our SAVIOUR's Retirement, which ſeems to have been Privacy; and that *ſuch* a *Title*, as GOD's Place of Prayer, was wholly appropriated to the Temple.

I apprehend, We ſhall have a more *defenſible*, and, I am perſuaded, We ſhall have a more *exalted* Senſe, if We ſuppoſe the Expreſſion to ſignify———the Copiouſneſs and Fervour of our LORD's Devotion———the vaſt Importance, and the unequalled Succeſs of this his prolonged and ſolemn Prayer. Which could no way be more emphatically declared, than by the Addition of the Divine Name: *He continued all Night in* the Prayer of GOD. See *Aſpaſio*'s Remark, *p.* 308.

* *Iſai.* xl. 22. What a noble *Image* is here, and what an exquiſitely fine *Contraſt!* GOD, the great GOD, ſitteth on thoſe lofty and immenſe Heavens, which, at an inconceivable Diſtance, ſurround this penſile Globe. From that moſt ſublime and magnificent Throne, he looks down upon the Inhabitants of the Earth. Who———in all their Pomp and Splendor———amidſt all their admired Works and boaſted Acquiſitions——— are *mean* and *impotent* in his Sight. Mean and Impotent as the poor Inſects, which wander over the parched Heath for Suſtenance: which ſpend all the Day in idle inſignificant Chirpings: and, at Night, take up their contemptible Habitation on a Blade of Graſs.

Asp. Indeed, *Theron*, I have been so much delighted with the Place; with the Companion in my Hand; and the noble Object before me; that I scarce observed, how the Time stole away. And I flatter myself, if You will take a Seat by my Side, and share my Entertainment; You will be more inclined to excuse, than to aggravate my Fault.

Ther. Is *Tully* then (for I observe his Name on the Volume) your Companion? And can such a devoted Admirer of the *Bible*, be so highly charmed with a *Heathen Classic?* ——St. *Augustine* somewhere declares, that, though passionately fond, before his Conversion, of *Tully*'s Writings; yet after that memorable Change, He could no longer relish those admired Compositions; because they were not sweetened, as He expresses Himself, with the *mellifluous* Name of *JESUS*.

Asp. I am far from pretending to such an exalted Pitch of Devotion, as that seraphic Father attained. I can spend a vacant Minute on the delicate Odes of *Horace*; and taste a refined Entertainment in *Virgil*'s beautiful Poem. But when I hear a *Sermon*, or peruse a *religious* Treatise, which borrows neither Dignity nor Charms from that amiable and glorious Name, I own myself extremely disappointed. Without the Offices, the Merits, or the Grace of *CHRIST*, the Sermon and the Treatise appear as *defective*, as a Body that is neither adorned with the Head, nor invivened with the Heart.

Ther. I suppose then You cultivate an Acquaintance with the *Grecian* and *Roman* Authors, in order to improve your Taste, and polish your Style.

Asp. These, and I am apt to think, more considerable Advantages than these, may be derived from an occasional Application to their Works. They may serve as so many Shades, to set off, with *heightened* Lustre, the Beauty and Glory of the sacred Oracles.

While I peruse *Plato*'s ornamented Page, or listen to *Cicero*'s flowing Periods, I am somewhat like the Person,

Perſon, who amuſes Himſelf in a Gallery of *painted* Flowers. He is pleaſed with the curious Creation of the Pencil. But, finds none of that *delicious* Fragrance, none of thoſe *breathing* Sweets, which meet Him in the Garden, and regale his Senſe from the blooming Parterre.——So, here are brilliant Sentiments and a florid Diction; delicate Touches of Wit, and bold Strokes of Deſcription. But, no Diſcovery of *CHRIST JESUS*———no Diſplays of his ineffable Love---no Overtures of Reconciliation with the bleſſed GOD. Nothing to yield Us *ſolid* Comfort, in our preſent State; or any *joyful* Expectations, with regard to the approaching Eternity.

Beſides; when I converſe with thoſe celebrated Geniuſes of Antiquity, who were at once the moſt erroneous, and the moſt judicious---the *moſt judicious*, in their Taſte of polite Literature; the *moſt erroneous*, in their Apprehenſions of inviſible Things; they ſhew me, what they never intended, the inexpreſſible Need of *Revelation*. They teach me to ſet a higher Value on that ineſtimable Gift. I bleſs the diſtinguiſhing Goodneſs of Providence, which has caſt my Lot *, not at *Athens*, but in IMMANUEL's Land. I ſay, with Wonder and Gratitude——— " Why did not *my* Exiſtence commence, in thoſe " Æras of religious Dotage? Why was not *my* Portion confined, to thoſe Regions of Barbariſm and " Deluſion? Why am not I burning Incenſe to Idols; " paying ſenſeleſs Adoration to ſculptured Stone; or " worſhipping, with deteſtable Ceremonies, a Set of " laſcivious, debauched, and ſcandalous † Deities?" ---Surely,

* Alluding to the Story of the Philoſopher, who uſed to bleſs the Gods for three Privileges.——That He was made, not a *Brute*, but a *rational* Creature.——That He was born, not in *barbarous* Climes, but in *Greece*——That he lived not in the more *uncultivated* Ages, but in the Time and under the Tuition of *Socrates*.

† This, I think, gives us the moſt deplorable and horrid Idea of the *Blindneſs* of our fallen Nature. The Heathens, even amidſt all the Politeneſs of their Taſte, and notwithſtanding their ſuperior

—Surely, *Theron*, from every Perusal of those Volumes, attended with such a Reflection, We shall see the utmost Reason to magnify *the tender Mercies of our GOD; whereby the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us* *, and brought us out of Darkness into the marvelous Light of the Gospel.

Permit me to mention another Benefit, which may result from a Correspondence with those masterly Writers.———The Streams may lead Us to the inexhaustible Fountain. Lead Us to admire the only wise GOD our SAVIOUR, who has given such a shining Vein of ingenuity to his rational Creatures. As I read their Works, and am charmed with their Beauties, I would frequently reflect —— "if the "Essays of a finite Mind, and the Compositions of a "mortal Pen, yield such high Satisfaction; what "rapturous, what unknown Delight must arise, from "an uninterrupted Communion with infinite Wis"dom? To stand——not at the Feet of *Homer*, "and attend the Flights of his elevated Imagination "——not in the Presence of *Socrates*, and hear the "Dictates of his sagacious Soul——but, to stand in "the Courts of the LORD, and before the "Throne of the LAMB. There to contemplate, "without any interposing Veil, the Counsels of his "unerring Providence; to have the Mysteries of "his redeeming Love, laid fully open to our view; "and receive the brightest Manifestations of all his "amiable, his adorable, his unspeakable Attri"butes.!"

Ther. These are Advantages, truly desirable, and equally obvious. Methinks, it *surprizes* me, that I should never so much as propose them; and *grieves* me,

superior Advancement in the Sciences, were Haters of the true GOD, and robbed Him of his Honour: Nay, what is unspeakably worse, they paid it to *Monsters*—Monsters of Lewdness and Treachery, Vice and Immorality. Egregious, sottish, almost incredible Stupidity! To worship those Beings, which deserved universal *Abhorrence!* To *deify* those Characters, which could never be sufficiently *detested!*

* Luke i. 78.

me, that I ſhould ſo long be deprived of them. A View to ſuch very ſuperior Improvements will, I hope, render my future Intercourſe with thoſe favourite Authors, ſtill more agreeable, and abundantly more beneficial.

But let me aſk, what Paſſage was engaging your Attention, this Afternoon?

Aſp. The great Orator's Treatiſe, concerning the *Nature of the Divine* BEING *. That Part eſpecially, which proves his Exiſtence and Perfections, from the Formation of the *human Body*.

Ther. And don't You perceive, that He is almoſt as deficient in the Knowledge of his Subject; as he is miſtaken in his Ideas of the ſupreme CAUSE?—— The exquiſite Contrivance and inimitable Workmanſhip of the human Frame, were, in thoſe early Ages, but dimly diſcerned. It was the *Infancy* of Anatomy: when the very Profeſſors had ſcarcely the Qualifications of a modern Pupil. Many of the received Notions, were childiſh; almoſt all of them, ſuperficial.

Aſp. Will my *Theron* then entertain me with a more accurate Deſcription of this wonderful Structure?

Ther. How could You take occaſion, *Aſpaſio*, from the Hint I dropped, to conceive any ſuch Expectation? It is one thing to *diſcover*, another to *correct*, what is amiſs. Many Spectators can point out an accidental Defect in ſome celebrated Statue, or a ſmall Indelicacy in ſome valuable Piece of Painting; who are abſolutely incapable of retouching the One, or ſupplying the Other.

Aſp. Since We are fallen upon this Point, You muſt give me leave to renew and urge my Requeſt. I ſhall be extremely glad to hear your Remarks upon the Subject. Eſpecially, as you have made this Branch of Science, a Part of your Amuſement; and not without the Advantage of *anatomical* Diſſections. Whereas, I have very ſeldom applied my Thoughts to

* *De Natura Deorum.*

to the former, and never had an Opportunity of being preſent at the latter.

Let me alſo obſerve, that our very Situation favours, or rather ſuggeſts ſuch a Topic of Converſation. All the fine Proſpects of the Country are excluded. We have ſcarce any Thing left, but *Ourſelves*, to contemplate. And ſhall this be the only Theme We neglect?

Ther. It is ſomewhat prepoſterous, I muſt confeſs, to pry into the Archives of Colleges; to ranſack the Cabinets of the *Virtuoſi*; to carry our Search through the whole Compaſs of external Nature; and, at the ſame Time, overlook the far more ſurpriſing Curioſities, which abound in the Compoſition of our own Bodies.

Since you inſiſt upon it, my Obſervations, crude and extemporaneous as they are, ſhall ſubmit themſelves to your Judgment. Provided, You will be content to receive, only a *few* of the *Outlines*, and nothing like a *finiſhed* Draught.

Aſp. Let me juſt hint, that the more *circumſtantial* your Account is, ſo much the more welcome will it be to your Friend, and ſo much the more honourable to our common CREATOR. For, I really think, that *Galen*'s Declaration upon this Head is perfectly juſt: which I have read in my favourite Commentator *Beza*, and which ſpeaks to the following Effect *.——"Such Treatiſes, as diſplay the Excellencies of the great CREATOR, compoſe "one of the nobleſt and moſt *acceptable* Hymns. "To acquaint Ourſelves with his ſublime Perfections; and point out to Others his infinite Power, his "unerring Wiſdom, and his boundleſs Benignity; this is a more *ſubſtantial* Act of Devotion, than "to ſlay Hetacombs of Victims at his Altar, or "kindle Mountains of Spices into Incenſe."——*Theron*, after pauſing a few Minutes, thus reſumed the Diſcourſe.

Ther.

* *Vid.* Bez. Annot. ad *Rom.* i. 20.

Ther. When ſome Maſter-builder undertakes to erect a magnificent Edifice, he begins with the leſs decorated, but more ſolid Parts. Thoſe which are to *ſupport*, or thoſe which are to contain the reſt. This Order, if You pleaſe, We will follow, in conſidering " the " earthly Houſe of our Tabernacle *."

Firſt, You have a Syſtem of *Bones*; caſt into a Variety of Moulds; inlarged or contracted into a Variety of Sizes. All *ſtrong*, that they may commodiouſly bear up the fleſhy Machine; yet light, that they may not depreſs the Animal with an incumbering Load.—— *Bored* with an internal Cavity, to contain the moiſtening Marrow; and *perforated* with exceedingly fine Ducts, to admit the nouriſhing Veſſels.—Inſenſible themſelves, they are covered with a Membrane † of exquiſite Senſibility. Which warns them of the Approach, and ſecures them from the Annoyance, of any injurious Friction: and, at the ſame time, preſerves the muſcular Parts, from being fretted in their Action, by the hard and rough Subſtance of the Bones.—Their *Figures* are always moſt preciſely fitted to their Uſes. They are generally larger at the Extremities, than in the Middle; that they may be joined more firmly, and not ſo eaſily diſlocated.—The Manner of their *Articulation* is truly admirable ‡, and remarkably various: yet never varied, without demonſtrating ſome wiſe Deſign, and anſwering ſome valuable End. Frequently, when two are united, the one is nicely rounded, and capped with a ſmooth Subſtance; the other is ſcooped into a Hollow of the ſame Dimenſions, to receive

* 2 *Cor.* v. 1. St. *Paul* very pertinently compares the bodily Structure to *a Houſe*. And adds, in that Strain of Godly Edifying, which runs through all his Writings, our *earthly and tent-like* Habitation, ἐπίγειον σκῆνος. Referring to its *mean Original*, as it was formed out of the Duſt; and to its *ſhort Continuance*, as it muſt ſoon return to Duſt again. Being, though commodious as a Houſe, yet tranſitory as a Tent: not like the *everlaſting Mountains*, which ſtand fixed and rooted to the Center; but like thoſe *portable Tenements*, which are ſet up in the Evening, are taken down in the Morning, and then their Place known no more.

† The *Perioſteum.* ‡ *Mirabiles Commiſſuras habent.* Cic.

ceive the polished Knob; and both are lubricated with an unctuous Fluid, to yield the readiest Rotation in the Socket.

The *Feet* compose the firmest and neatest Pedestal, infinitely beyond all that Statuary or Architecture can accomplish; capable of altering its Form, and extending its Size, as different Circumstances require. Besides performing the Office of a Pedestal, they contain a Set of the nicest Springs; which help to place the Body in a Variety of graceful Attitudes, and qualify it for a Multiplicity of advantageous Motions. — The undermost Part of the Heel, and the Extremity of the Sole, are shod with a tough, insensible, sinewy Substance. This we may call, a Kind of *natural Sandal*. It never wears out; never wants Repair; and always prevents that undue Compression of the Vessels, which the Weight of the Body, in walking or standing, might otherwise occasion.——The *Legs* and *Thighs*, are like substantial and stately Columns †; articulated in such a Manner, that they administer most commodiously to the Act of Walking, yet obstruct not the easy Posture of Sitting. The Legs swell out, towards the Top, with a genteel Projection; and are wrought off, towards the Bottom, with neat Diminutions. Which Variation lessens their Bulk, at the same Time that it increases their Beauty.

The

† Styled therefore by the sacred Philosopher, *The strong Men*, Eccles. xii. 3. And compared by the same beautiful Writer, to *Pillars of Marble*, Cant. v. 15.—As these are the strongest Parts of the Body, and the Support of all the other, hence, I presume, arose that *proverbial* Expression, which occurs in the History of *Samson*, שוק על-ידך Judg. xv. 8. Rendered by the *Septuagint*, not very exactly, κνημην επι μηρον; by our *English* Translators, rather too vulgarly, *Hip and Thigh*. I believe, the Word שוק signifies Here, as it certainly signifies in many other Places what the *Latins* call *Armus*. And that the Image is taken from some robust and fierce Animal, whose *Shoulders* before and whole *Thighs* behind, are broken in Pieces. Then what mischief can He do? What Resistance can He make? He is utterly disabled. So that the Expression seems to denote, (and might, perhaps, without Violence to the Original, be translated) *A total Overthrow*.

The *Ribs*, turned into a regular Arch, are gently moveable for the Act of Reſpiration. They form a ſecure Lodgment for the Lungs and the Heart: which, being ſome of the moſt diſtinguiſhed and important Organs of Life, have their Reſidence fortified by this ſtrong ſemicircular Rampart ‡.—The *Backbone* is intended, not only to ſtrengthen the Body, and ſuſtain its moſt capacious Store-rooms; but alſo to bring down that Communication of the Brain, which is uſually termed the *ſpinal Marrow*. As an open Channel, it conveys, as a well-cloſed Caſe, it guards this vital Silver §; and, by ſeveral commodious Outlets, tranſmits the animating Treaſure into all the inferior Parts. Had it only been large, ſtraight and hollow, it might have ſerved theſe ſeveral Purpoſes. But then the Loins muſt have been inflexible, and every Man impaled (not by the Executioner, but by Nature) on a Stake co-eval with his Exiſtence. To avoid which, it conſiſts of very ſhort Bones, cloſely knit together by intervening Cartilages. This Peculiarity of Structure prevents Diſlocation; and gives the main Pillar of our Frame the *Pliancy* of an *Oſier*, even while it retains the *Firmneſs* of an *Oak*---By this means, it is a Kind of continued Joint, capable of various Inflections, without bruiſing the ſoft medullarly Subſtance, which fills its Cavity; without intercepting the nervous Fluid, which is to be detached from this grand Reſervoir; or diminiſhing that Strength, which is neceſſary to ſupport all the upper Stories.---A Formation ſo very peculiar in any other of the Solids, muſt have been attended with great Inconveniencies. Here it is unſpeakably ſerviceable. Is both for Workmanſhip and Situation, a Maſter-piece of creating Skill never enough to be admired.

The

‡ *Thou haſt fenced me*, ſecured my inward and vital Parts, *with Bones and Sinews*, Job x. 11.—— *Crates Pectoris*, is *Virgil*'s Expreſſion.

§ This is ſuppoſed to be the Part, which *Solomon* deſcribes by *The Silver Cord:* and is indeed like a Cord, on Account of its *Shape*; like Silver, on Account of its *Colour*, Eccleſ. xii. 6.

The *Arms* pendent on either Side, are exactly proportioned to each other; that the Equilibrium of the Structure may not be disconcerted. These, being the Guards which defend *, and the Ministers which serve the whole Body, are fitted for the most *diversified* and *extensive* Operations. Firm with Bone, yet not weighty with Flesh; and capable of performing, with singular Expedition and Ease, all Manner of useful Motions. They bend inwards, and turns outwards; they rise upwards, and stoop downwards; they wheel about, and throw themselves into whatever Direction We please.---To these are annexed the *Hands*: and all terminated by the *Fingers*. Which are, not like the Arms, of the same Length, and of an equal Bigness; but in both Respects different. Which gives them a more graceful Appearance, and a much greater Degree of Usefulness. Were they all Flesh, they would be *comparatively* impotent: were they one intire Bone, they would be *utterly* inflexible. But consisting of various little Bones, and a Multitude of Muscles, what Shape can they not assume? What Service can they not perform?---Being placed at the End of the Arm, the Sphere of their Action is exceedingly inlarged. This advantageous Situation realizes the Fable of *Briareus*; and renders a Pair of Hands, as serviceable as an Hundred. —— The Extremities of the Fingers, are an assemblage of fine tendonous Fibres, most acutely sensible †. Which, notwithstanding the Delicacy of their Texture, are destined to almost incessant Employ, and frequently exercised

* Called, in *Solomon*'s figurative but elegant Sketch of Anatomy, *The Keepers of the House*, Eccles. xii. 3.

† So very acute is the Sensibility of these Parts, that, I am informed, it furnishes the *Tribunal* of *Inquisition*, with one of the most refined Expedients in the *Art* of *Torture*. A strong Quill, sharpened by the Pen-knife, and dipped in some inflammable Liquor, is thrust deep between the Nail and the Finger. When the Quill has cut its Way through the shivering Nerves; and, stands planted, like a Dagger, amidst the gushing blood; some barbarous Hand sets Fire to the Extremity. The keen Point, the slow Flame, and both in the Seat of the most lively Sensation, put the miserable Sufferer to the *most excruciating* Pain.

exercised among rugged Objects. For this Reason, they are overlaid with the *Nails*, a Sort of horny Expansion: which, like a Ferule, hinders the Flesh from being ungracefully flattened; and, like a Sheath *, preserves the tender Parts from injurious Impressions.

In the Ministry of the Hands, and Activity of the Fingers, We possess a Case of the *finest Instruments*, or a Collection of the *noblest Utensils*. Qualifying Us for the Execution of every Work, which the projecting Genius can devise, or the lavish Fancy crave. — To these We are obliged for the beautiful Statues, which have often entertained our Eyes, in yonder solitary Walks; and even for that melodious Trumpet, which now addresses our Ears, from the Summer-house on the Fish-pond.——These raise the lofty Column, and turn the spacious Arch. These swell the majestic Dome, and adjust the commodious Apartment. Architecture, with all her striking Beauties, and all her rich Benefits, is the Creation of the human Hand.--- Yielding to the Strength of the Hand, the tallest Firs fall to the Ground, and the largest Oaks descend from the Mountains. Fashioned by the Dexterity of the Hand, they accommodate the Sailor with a *floating Warehouse*; and circulate, from *Britain* to *Japan*, the Productions of Nature, and the Improvements of Art. Obedient to the human Hand, Metals ascend from their subterranean Beds; and compose the most substantial Parts of that *curious Machine*, † which transmits far and near, to the Monarch's Palace, and to the Peasant's Hut, such Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, as *the Gold and Crystal cannot equal* ‡.

Among the *Egyptians*, the Hand was the Symbol of Strength: among the *Romans* it was an Emblem of Fidelity: and, I think, it may, among all Nations, be looked upon as the Ensign of *Authority*. It is the original and the universal Sceptre; that which not only represents, but ascertains our Dominion, over all the Elements, and over every Creature. —— Though Providence has not given Us the Strength of the Horse, the

* *Digitis Munimina.* † The Printing-press.
‡ Job xxviii. 17.

the Swiftneſs of the Greyhound, or the ſagacious Scent of the Spaniel; yet, directed by the Underſtanding, and enabled by the Hand, We can ſubject them to our Will; turn them to our Advantage; and, in this Senſe, make them all *our own*. Theſe Hands (ſurpriſing to relate!) theſe ſhort Hands have found out a Way, whereby they can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can penetrate the Bowels of the Earth; and reach from Shore to Shore. Theſe *feeble* Hands can manage the Wings of the Wind; can arm themſelves with the Rage of the Fire; and preſs into their Service the forcible Impetuoſity of the Waters.—How eminent is the Dignity! How extenſive the Agency of the Hand! It would require more Eloquence, than your Orator poſſeſſed, to diſplay the former; and more Pages than your Book contains, to deſcribe the latter. — How greatly then are We indebted to our indulgent CREATOR, for accommodating Us with this noble, this diſtinguiſhing, this invaluable Member!

Above all, is the *Head*; a majeſtic Dome, deſigned for the Reſidence of the Brain. It is framed in exact Conformity to this important Purpoſe; ample, to receive it; ſtrong, to uphold it; and firm to defend it. ——As the Head reſembles the *General*'s Tent in an Army, or the *Monarch*'s, Palace in a City; it has a Communication eſtabliſhed with all, even the moſt inferior and remote Parts of the Syſtem. Has Outlets and Avenues, for the ready Diſpatch of Couriers to all Quarters? and for the Reception of ſpeedy Intelligence, on every intereſting Occaſion. It is furniſhed with Lodgments, wherein to poſt Centinels of various Characters, and appointed for various Offices. ——To expedite their Operations; whether they are employed in reconnoitring what paſſes *without*, or examining what claims Admittance *within*; the whole turns upon a curious Pivot, moſt nicely contrived, to afford the largeſt and freeſt Circumvolutions.

This ſtately Capital, is ſcreened from Heat; defended from Cold; and at the ſame time very much beautified, by a copious Growth of *Hair*. Which flows down from the parted Forelock in decent Curls;

and hangs, mantling on the Cheeks, cluſtering on the Shoulders.---A Decoration *, incomparably more *delicate*, than any or all the Orders of Architecture can ſupply; and ſo perfectly *light*, that it no way incumbers or incommodes the Wearer.

While many Animals creep on the Ground: while all of them are prone in their Poſture, or their Aſpect: the Attitude of Man is erect.---Which is by far the moſt *graceful*; has an Air of Dignity, and beſpeaks Superiority.---It is by far the moſt *commodious*; fits Us for the Proſecution of every grand Scheme, and facilitates the Succeſs of all our extenſive Deſigns.---It is likewiſe attended with the greateſt *Safety*; being, if not leſs than any other Poſition expoſed to Dangers, yet more happily contrived to repel or avoid them.

Aſp. May it not likewiſe be intended, to remind Us of our exalted Original, and our ſublime End? Our *Original*, which was the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, and the Spirit of the MOST HIGH. Our *End*, which is, not the Soil We tread on, or any of its low Productions, but the Heaven of Heavens, and the *Things that are above*.

But not to divert from our Subject; which, in my Friend's Manner of handling it, is as entertaining, as it is inſtructive.---The Bones (to carry on your own Alluſion) are only the *Rafters*, the *Beams*, the *Shell* of the living Edifice. You have raiſed the Walls, and laid the Floors; You have made the proper Diviſions,

* *Abſalom*'s Hair was reckoned a diſtinguiſhing Part of his Beauty, 2 *Sam* xiv. 26.---The Amiableneſs of the Church, in the exemplary Converſation of true Believers, is diſplayed by the ſame Ornament. *Thy Hair is as a Flock of Goats, that* are ſeen afar off, and *appear* in a pendent Attitude from the ſummit of *Mount Gilead*; moſt agreeably adorning the Place, and detaining the Spectator's Eye. *Cant* iv. 1. I prefer the Expoſition of *Arias Montanus*, שגלשו *quæ pendent, quæ prominent*. As it takes in a Circumſtance, which correſponds with the *penſile* Poſition of the Hair; renders the Compariſon more *full* and *exact*; and is, according to the Obſervation of a moſt accurate Judge, one of the chief *Remarkables* in ſuch a Proſpect;

Non Ego vos poſthac, viridi projectus in Antro,
Dumoſa pendere procul de Rupe videbo. VIR.

viſions, and left the neceſſary Apertures. But in every finiſhed Houſe, the Roof is covered, and the Rooms are wainſcoted. The Saſhes are hung, and the Doors turn upon their Hinges. The Grates are fixed, and the Stairs aſcend. *Within*, the Lodgings are furniſhed; *without*, the Front is ornamented. All is rendered commodious for domeſtic Uſe, and graceful to the external View.

Ther. This likewiſe is executed by the great, the Divine ARTIFICER. --- Here are *Ligaments*; a tough and ſtrong Arrangement of Fibres; to unite the ſeveral Limbs; and render, what would otherwiſe be a disjointed unwieldy Jumble, a well-compacted and ſelf-manageable Syſtem. --- *Membranes*; or thin and flexile Tunicles; appointed to inwrap the fleſhy Parts; to form a Connection between ſome, and make a Separation between others *

Arteries, the Rivers of our little World †, or the Aqueducts of the organized Metropolis. Some of which aſcend to the Head: others ſpread themſelves over the Shoulders: ſome extend to the Arms: ſome deſcend to the Feet: and ſtriking out, as they go, into numberleſs ſmaller Canals, viſit the Streets, the Alleys, and every individual Apartment of the vital City.—Theſe, being wide at their Origin, and leſſening as they branch themſelves, check the rapid Impetus of the Blood. To ſuſtain this Shock, they are endued with uncommon Strength: by performing this Service, they oblige the crimſon Current to paſs into the *narroweſt Defiles*, and diſtribute itſelf into all Quarters. ---The Blood, thrown from the Heart, dilates the *Arteries*, and their own elaſtic Force contracts them. By which means they vibrate, in proper Places, very perceivably againſt the Finger; bring Advices of the utmoſt Importance to the Phyſician; and very much aſſiſt Him, both in diſcovering the Nature

* The Inteſtines are *faſtened* to each other by the *Meſentery*. The Breaſt is divided into two Cavities by the *Mediaſtinum*. Both which are reckoned among the Membranes.

† A human Body was called by the Antients, The *Microcoſm*; that is, a little World, or the World in Miniature.

of Diſeaſes, and preſcribing for their reſpective Cures.---The larger Arteries, where-ever the Body is formed for Incurvation, are ſituate on the *bending* Side: left, being ſtretched to an improper Length by the Inflexion, their Dimenſions ſhould be leſſened, and the circulating Fluid retarded.---They are not, like ſeveral of the conſiderable Veins, laid ſo near the Surface, as to be portruſive of the Skin; but are depoſited to a *proper Depth* in the Fleſh. This Situation renders them more ſecure from external Injuries. It conceals likewiſe thoſe Starts and Reſilitions of the Pulſe, which, if apparent, would diſcompoſe the moſt ſedate, and diſfigure the moſt comely Countenance.---Could We caſt our Eye upon the River, which runs through the neighbouring Meadow, We might obſerve ſeveral Mills interſecting the Stream. The Waters at thoſe Places, if not intirely ſtopped, drain away very ſlowly. In conſequence of this Obſtruction, the lower Channels would be ſunk dry, and the upper Ones ſwelled into a Flood. To obviate both theſe Inconveniencies, *Low-ſhots* are provided: which, carrying off the Surcharge, prevent a Glut above, and ſupply the Banks below. In thoſe Parts of the Body, which are moſt liable to Preſſure, much the ſame Expedient takes place. The Arteries *inoſculate*; or, breaking into a new Track, they fetch a little Circuit, in order to return and communicate again with the main Road. So that, if any Obſtacle blocks up, or ſtraitens the direct Paſſage; the Current, by diverting to this new Channel, eludes the Impediment; maintains an uninterrupted Flow; and ſoon regains its wonted Courſe.

Veins are appointed to receive the Blood from the Arteries, and reconvey it to the Heart.---Small at their Riſe, and inlarging as they advance, they are void of any Pulſation. In theſe, the Preſſure of the circulating Fluid, is not near ſo forcible as in the arterial Tubes: for which Reaſon, their Texture is conſiderably ſlighter. Such an exact *Oeconomiſt* is Nature, even amidſt all

all her *Liberality* * ! --- In many of these Canals, the Current, though widening continually, and acquiring a proportionable Increase of Gravity, is obliged to push its Way against the Perpendicular. By which Circumstance, it is exposed to the Hazard of falling back, and overloading the Vessels; if not of suppressing the animal Motion. For a Security against this Danger, *Valves* are interposed at proper Distances. Which are no Hindrance to the regular Passage, but prevent the Reflux; sustain the augmented Weight; and facilitate a Progress to the grand Receptacle. This auxiliary Contrivance comes in, where the Blood is constrained to climb; but is dismissed where the steep Ascent ceases, and such a Precaution would be needless.

Here are *Glands*, whose Office it is, to filtrate the passing Fluid. Each of these Glands is an Assemblage of Vessels, complicated and intervolved, with seeming Confusion, but with perfect Regularity. As some kinds of Sieves transmit the Dust, and retain the Corn; others bolt out the Meal, and hold back the Bran; so, some of these glandulous Strainers draw off the finest, others the grossest Parts of the Blood. Some, like the Distiller's Alembic, *sublimate* †; others, like the common Sewers, *defæcate* ‡. Each forms a Secretion, far more curious than the most admired Operations of Chemistry; yet all necessary for the Support of Life, or conducive to the Comfort of the Animal.---*Muscles*, wove in Nature's nicest Loom; composed of the slendrest Fibres, yet endued with incredible Strength;

* A parallel Instance of Frugality is observable in the Arteries; whose Coats are spun *thinner*, as the Diameter of the Vessels becomes *smaller*, and the Pressure of the Blood *weaker*.

† The glandulous Substance of the *Brain*; which secrets the animal Spirits.

‡ The *Liver* and *Kidneys*. The former of which separates the *Gall*; the latter drains off a *Fluid*, which, being sufficiently known, need not to be named. I could wish, it had not been so explicitly and coarsly mentioned, in our Translation of the best of Books. But that we had rendered the Original, in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Every Male*; in Isai. xxxvi. 12. *Eat and drank their own Excrements.*

fashioned after a Variety of Patterns, but all in the highest Taste for Elegance, Conveniency, and Usefulness.---These, with their *Tendons* annexed, constitute the Instruments of Motion. The former, contracting their Substance, operate somewhat like the Pulley in Mechanics. The latter, resembling the Cord, are fastened to a Bone, or some Partition of Flesh; and, following the muscular Contraction, actuate the Part into which they are inserted. This, and all their Functions they execute, not like a sluggish Beast of Burden, but quick as the Lightning.---*Nerves*, surprisingly minute Tubes; derived from the Brain, and permeated by an exquisitely subtle Fluid. Which, gliding into the Muscles, set them on work; diffuse the Power of Sensation through the Body; or, returning upon any Impression from without, give all needful Intelligence to the Soul.---*Vesicles*, distended with an unctuous Matter; in some Places, compose a soft Cushion * for Nature; in other Places, they fill up her Vacuities, and smooth the Inequalities of the Flesh. *Inwardly*, they supple the several Movements of the active Machine. *Outwardly*, they render its Appearance plump, well proportioned, and graceful.

The *Skin*, like a curious Surtout †, exactly fitted, is superinduced over the whole. Formed of the most delicate Net-work; whose Meshes ‡ are minute, and whose Threads ‖ are multiplied, even to a Prodigy.---

The

* The *Calf* of the *Leg*, for instance; whose large Collection of Muscles, intermingled with Fat, is of singular Service to those important Bones. It flanks and fortifies them, like a *strong Bastion*. It supports and cherishes them, like a *soft Pillow*. And what is no less pleasing to observe, it accommodates and defends them on that very Side where they most frequently rest their Weight, and where they are least capable of being guarded by the Eye.

† *Thou hast clothed me with Skin and Flesh*, Job x. 11.—The Word *Surtout* is used according to the *French* Etymology; signifies a Garment, coming over the whole Body; and is most beautifully expressed by our LORD's ἀμφιεννυσι. Matt. vi. 30.

‡ The Pores of the *Cuticula*.

‖ The nervous Fibres, and other Vessels of the *Cutis*.—Nature is somewhat like Solomon's virtuous Woman, *Who is not afraid of the Snow for her Household, because her Household are cloathed in Scarlet:*

The Meſhes ſo *minute*, that nothing paſſes them, which is diſcernable by the Eye; though they diſcharge, every Moment, Myriads and Myriads of ſuperfluous Incumbrances from the Body. The Steam, ariſing from the warm Buſineſs tranſacted within, is carried off by theſe real, though imperceptible Funnels *. Which conſtitutes, what We uſually call, *inſenſible Perſpiration*.---The Threads ſo multiplied, that neither the Point of the ſmalleſt Needle, nor the incomparably nicer Spear of a Gnat, nor even the inviſible Lancet of a Flea, can pierce any ſingle Part, without cauſing an uneaſy Senſation and a Suffuſion of Blood: conſequently, without wounding, even by ſo ſmall a Puncture, both a Nerve and a Vein †.

The Veins, either pervading, or lying parallel with, this fine tranſparent Coat, *beautify* the human Struc-

 ture;

Scarlet: or, as it may be rendered, are clothed *with Pairs*, have two Coats a piece, *Prov.* xxxi. 21. (See *Gen.* vi. 19, 20, where the Word שנים occurs in this Signification.)—The Body alſo is accommodated with a double Covering. The *outermoſt* is that ſoft whitiſh Tegument, which riſes in the Puſtule of a Bliſter. The *innermoſt* is that reddiſh and exquiſitely tender Part, which appears when the Bliſter is broke, and the dead Skin taken off.—The firſt is void of Senſe, and intended to ſkreen the ſecond, not only from the Stroke of Injuries, but even from the Impreſſions of the Air: which, mild as it may feel to the *ſheathed*, would be too rough and ſharp for the *naked* Nerves.

There ſeems to be an Alluſion to this Particular in that remarkable Expreſſion. *Skin for Skin*, עז בער עור Job ii. 4. *Skin even unto Skin*; the very inmoſt Skin, which cannot be taken away, without the greateſt Loſs, and ſevereſt Pain. Yet, even this Loſs a Man would ſuffer, this *Pain* He would endure, in order to preſerve *precious* Life.

* Theſe are ſomewhere prettily ſtyled, *cutaneous Chimneys*; and no Wonder they are imperceptible, if, as Mr. *Lewenhoek* affirms, a ſingle Grain of Sand will cover no leſs than 125,000.

† A *Blood-Veſſel* at leaſt. Compared with theſe Veſſels, the fine *filmy Threads*, which, on ſome bright autumnal Morning, float in the Air, or hang on the Stubble, muſt be large as a Bell-rope, or *bulky* as a Cable. Such Tubes, One would think, ſhould *burſt* at every Breath We draw, or even break with their own Fineneſs. Yet, they are the Conduit-pipes, which convey the vital Fluid from and to the grand Reſervoir. And ſo exquiſite, ſo admirable is their Texture, that they will out-laſt the Strength of Lead, or the Heart of Oak: *theſe* wearing away, *theſe* growing ſtronger, by Uſe.

ture; thoſe Parts eſpecially, which are moſt conſpicuous, and intended for public View. The pliant Wriſt, and the taper Arm, they variegate with an Inlay of living Sapphire. They ſpread Vermillion over the Lips *, and plant Roſes in the Cheeks. While the Eye, tinged with gloſſy Jet, or ſparkling with the Blue of Heaven, is fixed in an Orb of poliſhed Cryſtal. Inſomuch that the earthly Tabernacle exhibits the niceſt Proportions, and richeſt Graces. Such *nice Proportions*, as afford the moſt correct Model for Statuary: ſuch *rich Graces*; as the Canvaſs never bore, as Painting imitates in vain.

Aſp. How juſt in itſelf, and how pertinent to our Purpoſe, is that well-known Acknowledgement of the ſacred and royal Anatomiſt; "*I am curiouſly wrought* †! "There is a Variety, a Regularity, and an Elegance, "in the Texture of my Body; in the Formation and "Arrangement of theſe Bones and Muſcles, theſe "Veins and Arteries; --- reſembling, ſhall I ſay?--- rather, infinitely ſurpaſſing the moſt coſtly and admired Embroidery."

It is one of the fineſt Similitudes, which the whole Circle of polite Arts could afford. Yet every Compariſon, fetched from the Performances of Mankind, muſt neceſſarily debaſe the noble Subject. All the Enrichments, which the Needle can give, or the moſt *ſplendid Silks* receive, are rude, are coarſe, are mere Sackloth, when ſet in oppoſition to the exquiſite Delicacy of the fleſhly Web. As indeed all the celebrated *Palaces*, *Amphitheatres*, *Temples*, which ever adorned the moſt magnificent Cities in the World, are but a Heap

* *Thy Lips are like a Thread of Scarlet*, Cant. iv. 3. Like a *Thread*, for their delicate *Shape*; like a Thread of *Scarlet*, for their glowing *Colour*.

† The Original רקמתי ſignifies *finely wrought*, or *elegantly flouriſhed with a Needle*—The Tranſlation adopted by our Liturgy is, in this Place, flat and inexpreſſive. The *Engliſh* Word *faſhioned*, has juſt the ſame Inferiority to the beautiful *Hebrew* Phraſe; as the *Badge*, tacked upon ſome poor Penſioner's Coat, has to the *Star* embroidered on a Nobleman's Breaſt. *Pſal.* cxxxix. 14.

Heap of Confuſion, if compared with the Symmetry and Beauty of the bodily Fabrick —And, what is beyond meaſure marvelous, all theſe Wonders of Mechaniſm and Decoration aroſe---not from the purer Elements---not from the more refined Parts of the Creation---but from the *Duſt* of the Ground *. How eaſily, *Theron*, can that ſtupendous ARTIFICER *renew* our Hearts, and transform our Souls into his own Image; who could raiſe ſuch delicate and ſtately Edifices, from Particles---deſpicable Particles of the trodden Soil!

I could not forbear interpoſing this Remark; becauſe, it tends to manifeſt our CREATOR's Glory, to encourage our Hopes, and ſtrengthen our Faith. Otherwiſe, I ſhould be angry with myſelf, for interrupting your Diſcourſe.---Pray, go on with your Deſcription of the animal Oeconomy. Only let me obſerve, That ſuch a Courſe of inceſſant Action, muſt *exhauſt* the Fluids; muſt *waſte* the Solids; and, unleſs both are ſupplied with proper Recruits, muſt gradually weaken, and at length totally deſtroy, the Machine.

Ther. For this Reaſon, it is furniſhed with the Organs, and endued with the Powers of *Nutrition*. ---*Teeth*; the foremoſt, thin and ſharp; fitted to bite aſunder the Food, or cut † off ſuch a Portion, as the Mouth can conveniently manage. The hindermoſt, broad and ſtrong; indented like the Surface of a Mill-ſtone ‡, with ſmall Cavities, and jagged with little Aſperities. Which qualify them to grind in pieces, whatever is tranſmitted to their Operation.

* *The LORD GOD formed Man of the Duſt of the Ground.* Gen. ii. 7.

† Called therefore, *Inciſivi.*

‡ Styled accordingly, *Molares.*—We find neither of theſe Kinds in the new-born Babe. As Milk is, for a conſiderable Time its appointed Food, Teeth would be of no Service to the Infant itſelf. As it is to preſs the tender Nipple for this milky Suſtenance, Teeth would be painful and prejudicial to the Nurſe. Therefore Nature has *poſtponed* the Formation of theſe fine Implements, till they become both neceſſary and beneficial.

Were the Teeth, like our other Bones covered with the uſual Membrane, the Act of *Chewing* would always occaſion great Uneaſineſs; and, when any hard Subſtance is eaten, might even lacerate the tender Tegument. Were they left without any Sort of Covering; they would ſuffer from the Inclemencies of the Air, and be liable to the Penetration of Liquors. In which Caſe, they muſt ſoon become ſoft and unfit for Service, or be corrupted, and intirely periſh. To guard againſt theſe Diſadvantages, they are curiouſly *glazed*, or overlaid with a neat *Enamel*; as white as Ivory, and harder than the Bone itſelf. Which renders them an Ornament to the Mouth*; ſecures them from various Injuries; and exempts them from Pain in the Office of Maſtication.

As the Rims and Cuſhions of a Billiard-Table, keep the Ball from flying off: and ſend it back into the green Area, for repeated Eſſays of Skill: ſo the *Lips* prevent the Food from ſlipping out of the Mouth; and, aſſiſted by the Tongue, return it to the renewed Attrition of the Grinders ---While the Lips, in Concert with the Cheeks, are employed in this Work, their Motion compreſſes the circumjacent Glands; and, from innumerable little Orifices, a thin *pellucid Liquor* exſudes. Which moiſtens the attenuated Food, and prepares it for more eaſy Digeſtion. ——— When the Mouth remains inactive, theſe Fountains of Spittle are, in a Manner, cloſed.

* This ornamental Furniture of the Mouth is, in the grand *oriental*, Manner deſcribed by *Solomon*, *Thy Teeth are like a Flock of Sheep, that are even ſhorn, which come up from the Waſhing*, Cant. iv. 2. Growing, not ſingle, like the Noſe; not in Pairs, like the Eyes; but in Rows conſiderably numerous, *like a Flock*.—None riſing higher than the other; none ſtanding unduly prominent beyond another; but all ſet as true, as if they were ranged by the Compaſs; and making as regular an Appearance, as the Flocks *that are even ſhorn*———They are clean alſo as the Fleeces which have no Spot, and white as the Colour of the pureſt Wool, like the Flocks *juſt come up from the Waſhing*.

cloſed. But, when it is exerciſed, either in ſpeaking or eating, their Moiſture then being peculiarly neceſſary, they never fail to give out a ſufficient Quantity.

When the Soldier charges his Carbine, the Cartridge could not make its way to the Bottom, without the Protruſion of the Rammer*. Neither would the Food, which We receive at the Mouth, deſcend by the Force of its own Weight, through a narrow and clammy Channel, into the Stomach. To effectuate therefore, and expedite its Paſſage, Muſcles, both *ſtrait* and *circular*, are provided. The former, inlarge the Cavity of the Throat, and afford a more eaſy Admittance; the latter, cloſing, behind the deſcending Aliment, preſs it downwards, and finiſh the Deglutition. —— Before the Food enters the Gullet, it muſt of neceſſity paſs over the Orifice of the *Windpipe*; conſequently, muſt be in very imminent Danger of falling upon the Lungs. Which would, if not intirely obſtruct the Breath, yet occaſion violent,

* This, and the other Similitudes, are undoubtedly *too mean* for the noble Occaſion. Neither do they, in *every* Circumſtance, quadrate with the Functions deſcribed. The Motion of the Muſcles, which miniſter to the Act of Deglutition, is different from the perpendicular Protruſion of the Rammer. And it is mentioned, only to demonſtrate the Neceſſity of *ſome propelling* Force, in order to convey the Aliment into the proper Receptacle.

When we deſcant upon a Subject, of ſuch extenſive Contrivance, and ſuch finiſhed Perfection, as the human Structure; it is ſcarce poſſible to find Similitudes that will correſpond in *all* Particulars, or that can riſe to the *Dignity* of the Original. Yet if they tend, in any tolerable Degree, to explain its Formation, to diſplay its Uſes, and render its wonderful Oeconomy ſomewhat more intelligible, perhaps they may allowed to take place.

I hope it will be remembred, that *Theron* ſpeaks, not as an Adept in the Science, but as One whoſe higheſt Pretenſions are, to admire the Work, and adore the ARTIFICER. Which Acknowledgment may intitle Him to ſome candid Indulgence, in caſe He ſhould offend againſt the *preciſe anatomical* Exactneſs, either of Sentiment, or Expreſſion.

lent, Coughing *, and great Inconveniencies. To obviate this Evil, the all-foreseeing CONTRIVER has placed a *moveable Lid*, or hung a *cartilaginous-Draw bridge* †. Which, when any the smallest Particle of Food advances to enter the Stomach, is pulled down and shut close; but, the very Moment the Morsel is swallowed, it is set loose and stands open. By this two-fold Artifice, the important Passage is always barred and made sure, against any noxious Approaches; yet, is always left free for the necessary Accession of Air, and commodious for the Purposes of Respiration.

When the Malster prepares his Grain for the Transmutations of the Brewhouse; he suffers it to lie, several Hours, steeping in the Cistern; before it is fit to be spread upon the Floor, or dried on the Kiln. The Meat and Drink likewise must remain, a considerable Time, in the *Stomach*; before they are of a proper Consistence and Temperature, either for the tender Coats, or the delicate Operation of the Bowels. For which Purpose, that great Receiver is made——strong to bear —— capacious to hold —— and so curiously contrived, as to lay a *temporary Embargo* ‡ upon its Contents. Here, they are lodged in the very Center of Warmth, and concocted by the most kindly Combination of Heat and Humidity. Here, they are saturated with other fermenting or diluting Juices; and are kneaded, as it were, by the Motion of the Stomach, and Compression of the neighbouring Parts. So that every the minutest Fragment is separated; the Whole is reduced to a *Tenuity*, abundantly finer than the exactest Grinding

* This is what We experience, when, in eating or drinking any Thing goes (as is commonly, and not improperly said) *the wrong Way*.

† Called the *Epiglottis*.

‡ Which is quite *contrary* to the Occonomy of the Gullet; though they are not only contiguous to each other, but a Continuation of the *same* Tube.

ing could effect; and all is worked up into the ſmoothest, moſt *nicely mixed* Pulp imaginable.—From hence it is diſlodged, by a gently acting Force; and paſſes, by a gradual Tranſition, into the Cavity of the Inteſtines.

Near the Entrance, punctual as a Porter in his Lodge, waits the *Gall-bladder* *; ready to transfuſe its acrimonious, but ſalutary Juices, on the advancing Aliment. Which *diſſolve* its remaining Viſcidities; *ſcour* the Paſſage of the Inteſtines; and keep all its fine Apertures clear.—This Bag, as the Stomach fills, is elevated by the Diſtention; as the Stomach empties, is proportionably depreſſed. The former Poſture brings on a Diſcharge, the latter occaſions a Suppreſſion, of the *Bile*. It is furniſhed alſo with a Valve, of a very peculiar, but moſt convenient Form †; through which the deterſive Liquid, cannot haſtily pour, but muſt gently ooze.---Admirable Conſtruction! Which, without any Care or Conſciouſneſs of ours, prohibits an *immoderate* Effuſion, yet aſcertains the *needful* Supply.

Sufficiently charged with this adventitious Fluid, the nutritive Maſs purſues its Way through the *Inteſtines*. Whoſe wonderful Meanders, are incomparably more curious than the Mazes of the *Dædalean* Labyrinth. They are actuated with a worm-like or undulatory Motion §: which protrudes the received Aliment, and forces its fine milky Particles into the *Lacteal Veſſels*. Theſe are a Series of the moſt delicate *Strainers*; ranged, in countleſs Multitudes, all along the Sides of the winding Paſſage. Each ſo nicely framed, as to admit the nutrimental balmy Juices, and reject the groſs excrementitious Dregs.---Had the Inteſtines been *ſtrait* and *ſhort*, the Food might have gone through them, without reſigning a ſufficient

* The *Gall bladder* is ſituate upon the lower Margin of the Liver; and to ſecret the *bilious* Juice, is ſuppoſed to be the principal Uſe of that largeſt of Glands. † A *ſpiral* Form.

‡ Styled *vermicular* or *periſtaltic*.

ſufficient Quantity of its nouriſhing Particles. Therefore this grandeſt of all the vital Ducts, is artfully convolved, and greatly extended; to afford Nature an Opportunity, of *fifting* more thoroughly whatever paſſes, and of detaining whatever may ſerve her Purpoſes.---Leſt ſuch Lengths of Entrails, ſhould be intangled among themſelves, or be cumbrous to the Wearer, they are packed into the neateſt Folds, and lie within a narrow Compaſs. They are at leaſt ſix Times longer *, than the Body which contains them. Yet are they *lodged*, not *crouded*; in a *Part*, not in the *whole* Region, of the lower Belly. And amidſt this ſmall Space, have ſufficient Room to execute the niceſt and moſt important Functions.---Though the alimentary Subſtance can never miſtake its Way; yet it may, through ſome accidental Impediment, attempt to return backward. In this Caſe, a Valve intervenes; and renders, what would be extremely pernicious, almoſt always impracticable.---As the Whole proceeds in this ſerpentine Courſe, it is perpetually ſending off Detachments of *nutritious* Juices. In conſequence of which, it would loſe its ſoft Temperature; might become rugged, and pain the tender Parts; perhaps, be hindered from ſliding on to its final Exit. To prevent ſuch an Obſtruction, Glands are poſted in proper Places ‡, and diſcharge a *lubricating* Fluid; which aids the Progreſs of the Maſs, and renews the Secretion of the Chyle. Till all that remains of the One, is

* According to this Calculation, they muſt meaſure, in a pretty tall man more than *thirty-ſix Feet*.—The Subſtance of the Bowels, though *thin* to a Delicacy, is *ſtrong* to a Wonder. The Skin of an Ox Gut, I am told, will endure the Blows of the Gold-beater's Hammer, for many Months, nay for ſeveral Years.

‡ In the Bowels, which lie neareſt the Stomach, theſe Glands, are *ſmaller* or *fewer*: becauſe, in thoſe Parts, the Aliment is copiouſly furniſhed with Moiſture. Whereas, in the Bowels, which are more remote from the Stomach, and receive the Food drained of a conſiderable Quantity of its Chyle, the lubricating Glands are either *multiplied* or *inlarged*. A moſt admirable Proviſion! Apparently diverſified, according to the ſeveral Changes of the Aliment; yet exactly adopted to the Exigencies of the Animal.

s clean drawn off; and the Other---But here You must excuse me; and for my Neglect of farther Particularity, your Author shall make an Apology; *Quemadmodum autem Reliquiæ Cibi depellantur, tum astringentibus se Intestinis, tum relaxantibus, haud sane difficile dictu est: sed tamen prætereundum est, ne quid habeat Injucunditatis Oratio* *.

The *Chyle*, drawn off by all the secretory Orifices, is carried along Millions of the finest † Ducts, and lodged in several *commodious Cells* ‡. As a Traveller, by baiting upon the Road, and taking proper Refreshment, is better qualified to pursue his Journey: so the Chyle, diverting to those little Inns, is mixed with a thin, diluting, watery Substance; which renders it more apt to flow, and more fit for Use.---From hence it is conveyed to one *common Receptacle* §, and mounts through a perpendicular Tube. When Provision or Ammunition is transmitted to an Army, it generally passes under an Escort of able Troops. As this is the immediate Support, and principal Nourishment of the whole System, its Conveyance is guarded and ascertained with peculiar Caution. The *perpendicular Tube*, not having sufficient Force of its own, is laid contiguous

* CICERO *De Nat. Deor.*—As *Theron* avoids meddling with a Subject, which is become useless and putrescent, I think myself obliged to imitate his *Delicacy*. Only I would add one Remark in the Notes, and shall beg leave to express it in *Greek*. That if it should prove, in any degree, disgustful; it may have, at least, the *negative* Merit, not to offend *many* Readers. Επει δε τα αποχωρουντα δυσχερη, απεστρεψε τους του των οχετους η φυσις, ϗ απηνεγκεν η δυνατον προσωτατω απο των αιθησεων. SOCRAT. Memorab.

† Fine indeed! Since their *Orifices*, through which they admit the Chyle, are not discoverable even by the very *best Microscopes*. To this prodigiously nice Constructure it is owing, that nothing enters the Substance of the Blood, but what is smaller than the smallest Arteries in the System: and thereby fitted to pass through the finest capillary Vessels, without causing any Obstruction.

‡ The Glands of the Mesentery.

§ The *Receptaculum Chyli*; a Reservatory, placed near the left Kidney.

ous to the great Artery; whose strong Pulsation drives on the creeping Fluid; enables it to overcome the steep Ascent, and unload its precious Treasure at the very Door of the Heart——Here, it enters the Trunk of a large Vein, most conveniently opened for its Reception. It enters in a *slanting* or *oblique* Direction. By this Method of Approach, it avoids thwarting, and coincides with the purple Stream; which, instead of obstructing its Admission, expedites its Passage; and instead of being a Bar to exclude it, becomes a Vehicle to waft it.---Its Entrance is farther secured by a Valve, admirably constructed, and most happily situate. Which *shuts* the Aperture against the refluent Blood, in case it should offer to obtrude itself; but *opens* a free, safe, and easy Avenue, to introduce this Milk, this Manna of Nature.

The *Blood*, through every Stage of its ample Circuit, having sustained great Expences; being laid under Contribution, by every Gland in the whole System; and having supplied Myriads of the capillary Vessels, with Matter for insensible Perspiration; must be very much impoverished. But is most opportunely recruited, by this Accession of Chyle---Yet though *recruited*, it is not *refined* In its present crude State, it is absolutely unqualified to perform the vital Tour, or carry on the animal Functions. Therefore, by a grand Apparatus of muscular Fibres, it is wafted into the *Lungs*; and pours a thousand, thousand Rills into either Lobe. ---In the Cells, the spongy Cells of this *amazing Laboratory*, it imbibes the Influences of the external Air; its heterogeneous Parts are thoroughly incorporated; and its whole Substance is made cool, smooth, and florid.---Thus improved, thus exalted, it is transmitted to the left Ventricle of the HEART; a *strong*, *active*, *indefatigable* * Muscle; placed in the very Centre of the

* *Indefatigable*—This is a very *distinguishing*, and no less *amazing* Property of the Heart. The large Muscles of the Arm, or the much larger of the Thigh, are soon wearied. A Day's Labour or, a Day's Journey, will exhaust their Strength. But the Muscle, which constitutes the Heart works through whole Weeks, whole Months, whole Years, and never becomes weary. Is equally a Stranger to *Intermission* and *Fatigue*.

the Syſtem. Impelled by this beating Engine, Part ſhoots upward; and ſweeps, with a bounding Impetus, into the Head. There, it impregnates the prolific Fields of the Brain; and forms thoſe *ſubtile ſpirituous* Dews *, which impart Senſe to every Nerve, and communicate Motion to every Limb. Part flows downward; rolls the reeking Current through all the lower Quarters; and diſpenſes the nutrimental Stores, even to the meaneſt Member, and the minuteſt Veſſel.

Obſerve, how the ſtately *Thames*, and the rapid *Rhine*, refreſh the Foreſt and the Groves; water the Towns, which croud their Banks; and make the Meadows they interſect, laugh and ſing. So, only with an incomparably *richer* Fluid, and with infinitely *more numerous* Streams, this human River laves the ſeveral Regions of the Body. Transfuſing Vigour, and propagating Health, through the Whole.

But, how ſhall a Stream, divided into Myriads of Channels, and pervading innumerable Tracts, how ſhall this be brought back again to its Source? Should any Portion, like your *Lake-Waters* after a Land-Flood, deviate from their Courſe, or be unable to return.—Putrefaction would take place—A Nuiſance would ariſe---Death might enſue. Therefore, the All-wiſe CREATOR has connected the Extremity of the Arteries, with the Beginning of the Veins. So that the ſame Force, which *darts* the crimſon Wave through the former, *drives* it through the latter. Thus it

* Theſe are, what We call, *The animal Spirits*; and it is generally ſuppoſed, that Senſation is cauſed, by the *undulatory* Motion of this nervous Fluid.—Though ſome imagine, it is performed by the *vibratory* Motion of the Nerves themſelves.—Others think, that neither of theſe Opinions will comport, with the Texture of thoſe fine Tubes, or with the Nature of the Fluid they contain.—It is, I believe, one of thoſe *Myſteries* in the material World, which may reconcile *thinking* and *unprejudiced* Minds, to the Myſteries of the *Chriſtian* Revelation. Why ſhould any One wonder, to find ſome Doctrines in the BIBLE, that ſurpaſs the Reach of human Underſtanding; when there are ſo many Operations in the Body, confeſſedly and abſolutely inexplicable by the moſt acute Anatomiſt?

it is reconducted, without the leaſt Extravaſation, to the great ſalient Ciſtern *. There played off afreſh, it renews and perpetuates the vital Functions.

Where two *oppoſite* Currents would be in Danger of claſhing, a fibrous Excreſence interpoſes †; which, like a projecting Pier, breaks the Stroke of each, and throws both into their proper Receptacle.---When the Waſture is to be *ſpeedy*, the Channels either forbear to wind in their Courſe ‡, or to leſſen in their Dimenſions §. When the Progreſs is to be *retarded*, the Tubes are twined into various Convolutions ‖, or their Diameter is contracted into a narrower Size.---Modeled by theſe judicious Rules; guarded by theſe wiſe Precautions; the living Flood never diſcontinues its interchangeable Tide: but, Night and Day, whether We ſleep or wake, ſtill perſeveres to ſally *briſkly* through the Arteries, and return *ſofily* through the Veins.

Such aſtoniſhing Expedients are uſed, to elaborate the Chyle—to blend it with the Blood—and to diſtribute both through the Body! By means of which, the animal Conſtitution is maintained. In Youth, its Bulk is increaſed; in Age, its Decays are repaired; and it is kept in tenantable Condition for the Soul, during the Space of ſeventy or eighty Years.

Theſe are a few, and but a *very few* Inſtances of that Contrivance, Regularity, and Beauty, which are obſervable in the human Frame. Attentive Inquirers diſcover *deeper* Footſteps of Deſign, and *more refined* Strokes

* *Solomon* makes uſe of this Similitude—*Or ever the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain; or the Wheel broken at the Ciſtern.* The two *Ventricles* of the Heart, repleniſhed with Blood, are fitly repreſented by a Ciſtern; and the *contractile* Force of their Fibres, acts like the *Water-wheel* in Hydraulics.—The *Pitcher*, which receives the Water at the Spring-head, and conveys it away for the Owner's Service, may probably ſignify the *Aorta*, and the *pulmonary* Artery; whoſe Functions correſpond with the Uſes of ſuch a Veſſel. *Eccleſ.* xii. 6.

† In the Point, where the Streams, from the *Vena cava* and *Vena aſcendens*, meet.

‡ In the great Artery, that deſcends to the Feet.

§ In every Interval, between all the Ramifications.

‖ In the Veſſels, which carry the Blood to the Brain; which form the viſcous Secretions; and indeed which conſtitute all the Glands.

Strokes of Skill. Diſcover them, not only in the grand and moſt diſtinguiſhed Parts, but in every Limb, and in every Organ: I may venture to add, in every Fibre that is extended, and in every Globule * that flows.

Aſp. What a *various*, but *uniform* Syſtem, is the Body; I ſee the greateſt Multiplicity of Parts, yet the moſt perfect Harmony ſubſiſts between them all. No one hinders, but each aſſiſts, the Operation of another; and all conſpire to the Benefit and Preſervation of the Whole. —— Moſt judiciouſly has the great Apoſtle touched this Subject: and moſt happily applied it, to illuſtrate the Reaſonableneſs, and inforce the Practice, both of *perſonal* and *ſocial* Duties, of private Content and public Concord †.

The Body, He obſerves, *is not one Member, but many.* To each of which ſome peculiar and needful Office is aſſigned. So that the *Foot*, though placed in the loweſt Order, and deſtined to ſerve on the very Ground, has no Reaſon to reckon itſelf a worthleſs Outcaſt; or to ſay, *Becauſe I am not the Head, I am not of the Body.* Neither has the *Head*, in its exalted Station, and amidſt its honourable Functions, any Cauſe to deſpiſe the inferior Limbs; or to ſay, with Contempt and Self-ſufficiency, *I have no Need of You.*---If there were no Feet, what would become of the locomotive Faculty? Or how could the Body convey itſelf from one Place to another? If there were no Hands, what ſhould we do for the Inſtruments of Action? Or how could the animal Frame be defended and accommodated?---Nay, the Parts, *which ſeem to be leſs honourable*, are neceſſary. Even thoſe, which form the Sediments, or throw off the Dregs, are of the laſt Importance to Life and its Comforts. Should thoſe be obſtructed in their Action, the moſt raging Torment enſues; ſhould the Obſtruction continue, Death is the inevitable Conſequence.---By this wiſe Adjuſtment, *there*

* The extreme *Minuteneſs* of the Globules, which form the *red* Part of our Blood, is one Exemplification of this Remark. If, as Mr. *Lewenhoeck* computes, every Globule be 25,000 times ſmaller than the ſmalleſt Grain of Sand.

† See 1 *Cor.* xii. 12, *&c.*

there is no Schism in the Body; no separate or interfering Ends are pursued by the Members; but the Safety and Support of each are the one undivided Care of all.

Thus should it be among Men, and among Christians; in the Civil Community, and in the Catholic Church. There is in both a *Subordination* of Persons, but a *Concatenation* of Interests. For which Reason, a general Agreement should take place, and a mutual Subserviency to each other's Welfare.——The *Meanest* have no Cause to be dissatisfied with their Condition; but to acquiesce in the unerring Disposal of Providence, and chearfully contribute their Share to the common Good.---The *Highest* should condescend to Men of low Estate; and maintain a regard to the Well-being of the Poorest, as that which is intimately connected with their own.---In a Word; *each* should feel a tender Concern for all; rejoicing in their Happiness, and studying to establish it; sympathizing with their miseries, and endeavouring to heal them.

I am sure, my *Theron* will be pleased with this fine Comparison, used by the Apostle; and adapted to Purposes, at once so noble and so benevolent. Especially, as it receives additional Propriety and Force from his own Observations---But I have one more Inquiry to make.

Your System, though *organized*, though endued with a Principle of *Motion*, and furnished with the Powers of *Nutrition*, is still destitute of *Sense*.---The Creation abounds with Objects, fitted to yield the most refined Entertainment. The Sun impurples the Robe of Morning, and Stars bespangle the Curtains of Night. Flowers of silver Whiteness, and of golden Lustre, enamel the Ground. Fruits of all radiant Hues, and of every delicious Taste, hang amiably dangling on the Boughs.

——————*Airs also, vernal Airs,*
Breathing the Smell of Field and Grove, attune
The trembling Leaves.

But

But We hear of no Capacities, formed for the *Enjoyment* of these various Delights. Without which, the Breath of Fields must lose its reviving Fragrance; the whispering Grove must degenerate into sullen Silence; and Nature's Book of Knowledge, all fair and instructive, be no better than a vast unmeaning Blank.

Ther. Therefore the great CREATOR, profusely gracious to Mankind, has made Us a Present, an inestimable Present, of the *Senses*. To be the Inlets of innumerable Pleasures, and the Means of administering the most valuable Advantages.

High in the Head, bright and conspicuous as a Star in the Brow of Evening, is placed the *Eye*. In this elevated Situation, like a Centinel posted in his Watch-tower, it commands the most inlarged Prospect. ---Consisting only of simple Fluids, inclosed in thin Tunicles, it conveys to our Apprehension all the Graces of blooming Nature, and all the Glories of the visible Heavens. --- How prodigiously wonderful! That an Image of the *hugest* Mountains, and a Transcript of the most *diversified* Landscapes, shall enter the small Circlet of the Pupil? --- How surprisingly artful! That the Rays of Light, like an inimitable Pencil, should paint on the optic Nerves; paint in an instant of Time; paint in their *truest* Colours, and *exactest* Lineaments, every Species of external Objects!

The Eye is so tender, that a slight Accident, scarce perceivable by some other Parts of the Body, would be very injurious to its delicate Frame. It is guarded therefore with remarkable Circumspection, and the most solicitous Care: with a Care, evidently proportioned to its nice Texture, and extensive Usefulness. It is *intrenched* deep in the Head; and barricaded on every Side, with a strong Fortification of Bones.---As the Incursion of the smallest Fly would incommode the polished Surface, it is farther defended by two substantial *Curtains*, hung on a most slender cartilaginous Rod. Which secure it, not barely from Blows, and from any hurtful Attrition, but also from every

every troublesome Annoyance. In Sleep, when there is no Occasion to exercise the Sense, but an absolute Necessity to protect the Organ, these Curtains *spontaneously* close, and never fail to lie shut. At any Time, they will *fly* together with a Motion, quick as the Alarm of Fear, I had almost said, quicker than Thought itself. At all Times, they are lined with an extremely fine Sponge *, wet with its own *native Dews*. Which lubricate the Eye-ball; oil, as it were, its Wheels; and fit it for a Course of unwearied Activity.---At the End of this skinny Mantelet (if I may use the military Style) is planted a Range of bristly *Palliſadoes* †. Which keep out the least Mote; ward off even the straggling Atom; and moderate the otherwise too potent Impressions of the Sun-beams ‡.

The *Brows* are a kind of natural *Pent house*, thatched and arched with curious Wreaths of Hair. The Thatch is intended to divert the Sweat, from trickling into the Eyes, and offending them with its Brine. The *Arches* are so finely coloured, and so elegantly turned, that they set off the Whiteness of the Forehead,

* The *Glandula Lachrymalis* and its Ducts; opening on the inner Part of the Eyelid, and secreting the Fluid, which *Theron* calls his Oil; because, it irrigates the Eyeball, and facilitates its Motion.

† The Hairs, which arise upon the Extremities of the Eye-lash, grow only to a certain convenient Length, and never stand in need of cutting.——They are not flaccid and pendulous, like those of the Head; but *stiff* and *prominent*, like Bristles. The first Sort would be troublesome, the last is beneficial.——Add to this, that their Points stand out of the Way; those of the upper Eyelid being bent upwards, and those of the lower downwards.—So nice is Nature, even in such small Matters!

‡ The incessant, the more than fatherly Care, which the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY takes of his People, is represented in Scripture by this extraordinary Provision, made for the Security of the Eye. Which is one of the *finest* Images, that Fancy can form; and one of the most *consolatory* Truths, that Faith can believe. *He kept him as the Apple of his Eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10.——*He that toucheth You, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. ii. 8.——The Reader will easily see, that the Comparison, every Way beautiful, is carried to the *highest* Pitch of Energy and Beauty, by the sacred Writers. Not barely the Eye, but the *Apple* or *Pupil* of the Eye; the tendereſt Part even of the most tender Member.

Forehead, and beſtow additional Grace on the whole Countenance.—Becauſe in our waking Hours, there is almoſt an inceſſant Call for thoſe little Orbs, they run upon the fineſt *Caſtors*; rolling upwards or downwards, to the Right-hand or to the Left; with the utmoſt Speed, and with equal Eaſe. Which Circumſtance, added to the Flexibility of the Neck, renders our *two* Eyes as uſeful, as if the whole Body, like the living Creatures in St. *John*'s Viſion, was *full of Eyes before and behind* *.

The *Ear* conſiſts of an outward Porch and inner Rooms, with Tools of the moſt admirable Contrivance and finiſhed Workmanſhip. The Contrivance and the Workmanſhip incomparably nicer, than the Deſigns of *Palladio*, or the Architecture of *Solomon*'s Temple; though the former were drawn from the magnificent Monuments of *Rome*, though the latter was built in the Taſte of *Heaven*. Yea; ſo conſummately nice is the Structure of this Organ, that GOD, the only wiſe GOD, is not aſhamed to be called its Artificer. *He that planted the Ear* †, is to be found among the Titles of the exalted JEHOVAH.—In one very remarkable Peculiarity, this minute Fabric reſembles that ſacred Edifice, the Porch being loftier ‡ than any other Part of the Building.

The *Porch* I call that ſemicircular Lodge, which ſtands ſomewhat prominent from the Head, and is—not *ſoft* and *ſinking* as Fleſh, leſt it ſhould abſorb the Sound, rather than promote the Reperculſion; not *hard* and *ſtubborn* as Bone, leſt it ſhould occaſion painful Inconveniencies, when We repoſe Ourſelves on either Side---but of a *cartilaginous* Subſtance, covered with a tight Expanſion of Skin, and wrought into irregular Bends and Hollows. Which, like circling Hills, or ſurrounding rocky Shores §, collect the wan-

* Rev. iv. 6. † Pſal. xciv. 9.

‡ Compare 1 *Kings* vi. 2. with 2 *Chron.* iii. 4.

§ Alluding to thoſe expreſſive Lines, where *Echo* ſeems to live in the Sound, as well as in the Senſe;

——*Vocemque inclusa volutant*
Littora, pulſati Colles Clamore reſultant. VIRG.

wandering Undulations of the Air; and transmit them, with a vigorous Impulse to the finely stretched Membrane of the Tympanum *. —— The *Avenue*, or narrow Entry, is secured from the insinuating Attempts of little Insects, by a *Morass* (shall I say?) of bitter and viscous Matter: disgustful to their Taste, and embarrassing to their Feet.---The *Hammer* and the *Anvil*; the *Stirrup* and the *Drum*; the winding *Labyrinths* †, and the sounding Galleries; these and other Pieces of Mechanism, all instrumental to the Power of Hearing, are beyond Description curious.

Amazingly nice must be the Formation, and inconceivably exact the Tension, of the auditory Nerves: since they correspond with the smallest Tremors of the Atmosphere, and easily distinguish their most subtile Variations. With the gentle Gales that fan Us, or even with the ruder Blasts that assault Us, these delicate Strings are but little effected. Whereas, they are perfect *Unisons* with those fine, those *significant* Agitations of the Air, which the acutest Touch is unable to discern. These living Chords, tuned by an Almighty Hand, and diffused through the echoing Isles, and sonorous Cells --- these receive the Impressions of Sound, and propagate them to the Brain. These ‡ give Existence to the Charms of Music,

* So called, because it resembles a *Drum*, both in Figure and Use. Being a fine Skin, expanded upon a Circle of Bones, and over a polished reverberating Cavity.——It is affected by the Vibrations of the external Air, as the Covering of the War-drum is by the Impressions of the Stick.——It is also furnished with *Braces*, which strain or relax it at pleasure; and accommodate its Tension either to loud or languid Sounds.

† Of this Kind is the auditory Tube; intended to *soften* and *qualify* the rushing Sound. Left, if the Incursion were direct, it might be too impetuous, and injure the delicate Expanse of the Tympanum.——While this is designed to moderate, the Concavities of the inner Structure are prepared to *heighten* and *invigorate* the Sound, by calling in the auxiliary Force of an Echo.—— Such Intentions, so *varying*, nay so *opposite*, concur to form this admirable Organ!

‡ Elegantly styled, *The Daughters of Music*. For this Phrase may refer, as well to the Organs which *distinguish*, as to those which *form*, the harmonious Accents. *Eccles.* xii. 4.——Methinks

Muſic, and reciprocate the rational Entertainments of Diſcourſe. Theſe treat my *Aſpaſio* with the Melody of the Woodland Choirs, and afford me the ſuperior Pleaſure of my Friend's Converſation.

The Eye perceives only the Objects that are *before* it; whereas, the Ear warns Us of Tranſactions that paſs above Us, behind Us, all around Us.——The Eye is uſeleſs, amidſt the Gloom of Night; and cannot carry its Obſervation, through the bolted Door, or the cloſed Window-ſhutter. But the Ear admits her Intelligence, through the *darkeſt* Medium, and the *minuteſt* Cranny.——The Eye is upon Duty, only in our waking Hours; but the Ear is always expanded, and always acceſſible *: a Courier, which never tires: a Centry, ever in his Box—To ſecure a Reſource, in caſe any Misfortune ſhould diſable *one* of the hearing or ſeeing Organs, our all-gracious MAKER has given Us *Duplicates* of each.

As there are tremulous Concuſſions impreſſed upon the Air, diſcernable only by the Inſtruments of Hearing; there are alſo *odoriferous* Particles, wafted by the ſame aerial Vehicle, which are perceivable only by the *Smell*.—The Noſtrils are wide at the Bottom, that a large Quantity of Effluvia may enter; narrow at the Top, that, when entered, they may cloſe their Ranks, and act with greater Vigour—Fine, beyond all Imagination, are the Steams which exhale from fetid or fragrant Bodies. The very beſt Microſcopes, which diſcover *Thouſands* and *Thouſands* of Animalcules in a Drop of putrified Water, cannot bring *one* Individual, among all theſe evaneſcent Legions, to our

thinks, I am always deſirous to add any oppoſite Expreſſion, or parallel Paſſage from the BIBLE. As I find, Writers of Taſte and Politeneſs are ſtudious to Embelliſh their Works with Quotations from the *Claſſics*. And I perſuade myſelf the Reader will allow me to gratify this favourite Inclination. Becauſe, every Portion of that ineſtimable Book, however minute, is like the Filings of Gold, or the Sparks of a Diamond. Is ſure, when properly applied, to add *Worth*, and impart *Beauty*.

* *Auditus autem ſemper patet. Ejus enim Senſus etiam dormientes egemus. A quo, cum Sonus eſt acceptus, etiam e Somno excitamur.* De Nat. Deor.

Sight. They ſail in numberleſs Squadrons, cloſe to our Eyes, cloſe by our Ears; yet are ſo amazingly attenuated, that they elude the Search of both. Nevertheleſs, ſo judiciouſly * are the *olfactory* Nets laid, and ſo artfully their Meſhes ſized, that they catch theſe vaniſhing Fugitives. They catch the roaming Perfumes, which fly off from the opening Honeyſuckle; and take in the ſtationed Sweets, which hover round the expanded Roſe. They imbibe all the balmy Fragrance of Spring, all the aromatic Exhalations of Autumn, and enable Us to banquet even on the *inviſible* Dainties of Nature.

Furniſhed with theſe ſeveral Organs,

——————*Not a* Breeze
Flies o'er the Meadow, not a Cloud *imbibes*
The Setting Sun's Effulgence, not a Strain
From all the Tenants of the warbling Shade
Aſcends, but whence our Senſes *can partake*
Freſh Pleaſure †.

Another Capacity for frequent Pleaſure, our bountiful CREATOR has beſtowed, in granting Us the Powers

* The *Keenneſs* and *Sagacity* of this Senſe, furniſhed the evangelical Prophet with a beautiful Metaphor, to diſplay the *Accuracy* of the MESSIAH's Judgment in ſpiritual Things. *Iſai.* xi. 3 הֲרִיחוֹ implies his Faculty or Senſe of *Smelling*; which Expreſſion is accommodated to our Language, and properly enough tranſlated, *Shall make Him of quick Underſtanding.* q. d. "He "ſhall judge, not according to external Appearance, but according to the State of the inner Man. Unfeigned Self-abaſement, "Affiance in a REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs, and Faith purifying the Heart; theſe Endowments, though not obſerved, or, "if obſerved, not valued by the World; theſe ſhall be the Teſt of "his Approbation, and the Objects of his Eſteem. Theſe conſtitute what is called in the next Words, *The Fear of the LORD.*

"In determining the Reality of theſe Qualities, He ſhall be "*unerringly* exact, and infallibly true. Let Hypocriſy put on "every Mask, and practice all her Wiles, they ſhall avail nothing "before the ROOT and OFFSPRING of *David.* (Ver. 1.) "As thoſe extremely ſubtle Effluvia, which eſcape the Inquiſition "of every other Senſe, are eaſily and perfectly diſtinguiſhed by "the *Smell*; ſo thoſe Receſſes of the Breaſt, and thoſe Secrets "of the Heart, which lie too deep for all human Diſcernment; "even they are naked and open, are obvious and palpable, to "his divinely ſagacious Underſtanding."

† See that very elegant Poem, *The Pleaſures of Imagination.* Book III.

Powers of *Taſte*. By means of which, the Food that ſupports our Body feaſts our Palate; firſt, treats Us with a pleaſing Regale; then, diſtributes its beneficial Recruits.——The Razor, whetted with Oil, becomes more exquiſitely keen. The *Saliva*, flowing upon the Tongue, and moiſtening its Nerves, quickens them into the livelieſt Acts of Senſation.——This Senſe is circumſtanced, in a Manner peculiarly benign and wiſe; ſo as to be a ſtanding, though ſilent Plea for *Temperance*. Without recurring to the Vengeance of GOD, or the Terrors of eternal Judgment, it is a powerful Diſſuaſive from irregular and exceſſive Indulgencies. Becauſe, the Exerciſe of Sobriety, ſets the fineſt Edge on its Faculties; and adds the moſt *poignant* Reliſh to its Enjoyments. Whereas, Riot and Voluptuouſneſs *pall* the Appetite; blunt its Senſibility; and render the Gratifications extremely languid, if not perfectly inſipid.—The Sight, the Smell, the Taſte, are, not only ſo many ſeparate Sources of Delight, but a joint Security to our Health. They are the *vigilant* and *accurate* Inſpectors, which examine our Food, and inquire into its Properties; whether it be pleaſant or diſagreeable; wholeſome or noxious. For the Diſcharge of this Office, they are excellently qualified, and moſt commodiouſly ſituate. So that nothing can gain Admiſſion through the Mouth, till it has undergone the Scrutiny, and obtained the Paſſport of them all.

To all theſe, as a moſt neceſſary and advantageous Supplement, is added the Senſe of *Feeling*. Which renders the whole Aſſemblage complete——While other Senſes have a particular Place of Reſidence; this is diffuſed throughout *the whole* Body. In the Palms of the Hands, on the Tips of the Fingers, and indeed through all the extreme Parts of the Fleſh, it is moſt quick and lively: as the advanced Guards, or Scouts upon the Frontiers, are or ought to be peculiarly attentive and wakeful.———Scouts did I ſay? The whole Army of *Xerxes*, drawn out in Battle array, with his *Millions* of ſupernumerary Attendants *,

* The Soldiers and Attendants of *Xerxes*, amounted to five Millions

were but like a few *Gleaners* ſtraggling in the Field; if compared, either in Number or Order, with thoſe nervous Detachments, which pervade the Texture of the Skin, and miniſter to the Act of Feeling.——How happily is this Senſe tempered between the two Extremes! Neither ſo *acute*, as the Membranes of the Eye; nor ſo *obtuſe*, as the Callus of the Heel. The former would expoſe Us to continual Pain; render our Cloaths galling, and the very Down oppreſſive. The latter would quite benumb the Body, and almoſt annihilate the Touch.——Nor this alone, but *all* the Senſes are moſt exactly adapted to their reſpective Offices, and to the Exigencies of our preſent State. Were they *ſtrained* to a much higher Tone, they would be Avenues of Anguiſh. Were they *relaxed* into greater Inſenſibility, they would be ſo many uſeleſs Incumbrances.

Aſp. How admirable and gracious is this Proviſion, which the bleſſed GOD has made, to accommodate Us with delightful Senſations, and inſtructive Ideas!—The Taſte, the Touch, and the Smell, are ſomewhat *ſtraightened* in the Extent of their Operations. The Ear carries on a Correſpondence with a *larger* Circle of Objects. But the Sight moſt amply ſupplies, whatever is wanting in all the other Senſes. The Sight ſpreads itſelf to an infinite Multitude of Bodies; and brings within our Notice ſome of the *remoteſt* Parts of the Univerſe. The Taſte, the Touch, the Smell, perceive nothing but what is brought to their very Doors. Whereas, the Eye extends its Obſervation as far as the Orbit of *Saturn*; nay glances, and in an Inſtant of Time, ſurveys the inconceiveable Diſtance of the Stars. The Compaſs of the Earth, and the Immenſity of the Skies, are its unlimited Range.

From this remarkable Variety, with regard to the *Sphere* and *Activity* of the Senſes, St. *Paul* forms one of the fineſt, boldeſt, and moſt important Compariſons in the World. By this He illuſtrates the Difference

Millions two hundred and eighty Thouſand: Another Army, ſo large and numerous, occurs not in all the Records of Hiſtory. *Vid.* HEROD. Lib. VII.

rence between the Wiſdom, which is derived from the Word of divine Revelation; and the Wiſdom, which is acquired by Dint of human Application.—In his Oration to the *Athenians*, ſpeaking of their moſt celebrated Sages, He ſays; *If ſo be, they might* feel after, *and find HIM* *. In his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſpeaking of the Man *Moſes*, our Author obſerves; That *He endured as* ſeeing *Him who is inviſible* †. Writing to his *Corinthian* Converts, He adds, as a farther Heightening of the Contraſt; *We all* beholding *with open Face the Glory of the LORD* ‡.—The Knowledge of the *Philoſopher*, is like that obſcure and ſcanty Information, which is to be obtained by groping with the Hand, in a dark Night. The Knowledge of the *Chriſtian*, is like that copious Influx of clear and enlarged Ideas, which We receive by the Mediation of the Eye, amidſt the Shining of a bright Day.

Tully, We find, has, in the Book before us, hit upon ſome of the moſt general and obvious Uſes, to which the ſeveral Parts of the human Body are adapted. Yet how *ſuperficial* and *deficient* appears his Penetration, when we take in the much deeper Diſcoveries, and the much higher Improvements of our modern Anatomy! Thus, and abundantly more defective, is his Knowledge of moral Duties and divine Doctrines; when compared with what is taught Us, in the *plain* Sermon on the Mount, and the unſtudied Epiſtles of the *Jewiſh* Tent-maker.

Therefore, though I would bleſs the beneficent GOD, for the Miniſtration of all the Senſes, and particularly for the noble Organs of Viſion: I would be more eſpecially thankful for that Light of the World, *CHRIST JESUS* and his glorious Goſpel; as well as for that *ſpiritual Eye* ‖, by which the

* *Acts* xvii 27. Ει αρα γε ψηλαφησειαν αυτον.

† Heb. xi. 27.

‡ 2 Cor iii. 18.

‖ *Luke* xxiv. 45. *Then opened He their Underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures.* Διηνοιξεν is the Word uſed in this Place, and the Word uſed by the evangelical Hiſtorian, when He relates that *ſupernatural* Act, which gave Sight to the Blind

One is understood, and the Other seen ——— a *lively Faith*. I would also long for that Place of beatific Enjoyment, where our Views of the adorable GODHEAD, And our acquaintance with the sublimest Truths, will as much transcend all our present Apprehensions, as the most inlightened *Saint* exceeds the benighted *Gentile*.

Ther. The crowning Gift—That which improves the Satisfaction and augments the beneficial Effects, accruing from all the Senses, is *Speech*.—Speech makes me a Gainer, from the Eyes and Ears of other People; from the Ideas they conceive, and the Observations they make. And what an admirable Instrument, for articulating the Voice, and modifying it into Speech, is the *Tongue!*———The Tongue has neither Bone nor Joint; yet fashions itself, with the utmost Volubility, into every Shape and every Posture, which can express Sentiment, or constitute Harmony. This little Collection of muscular Fibres under the conducting Skill of the CREATOR, is the Artificer of our Words *. By this We communicate the Secrets of the Breast, and make our very *Thoughts* audible. By this We instruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Distressed; We glorify GOD, and edify each Other †; the Academic explains the abstrusest

* I am sensible, that the *Glottis* has a considerable Share, in modulating the Sound, and forming the Voice. But, as the Nature and Office of this most *curious Aperture*, are very little known by the Generality of People; We choose to follow the popular Opinion, so neatly described by the Poet,

——— ——— *Dædala Lingua,*
Lingua figuratrix Verborum, Opifexque Loquelæ.

Anti-Lucret.

† The articulating Tongue is called *Our Glory*, Psal. lvii. 8. And such indeed it is, when devoted to these Purposes. It is then a Distinction, not only of Man from the brutal Herd, but of

ſtruſeſt Sciences, and the Eccleſiaſtic preaches the everlaſting Goſpel.——This is likewiſe the Efficient of *Muſic*. It is ſoft as the Lute, or ſhrill as the Trumpet: it can warble as the Lyre, or reſound like the Organ. Connecting the ſacred Anthem with its tuneful Strains, We ſooth the Cares, and beguile the Toils of Life: We imitate the Angelic Choirs, and anticipate, in ſome Degree, their celeſtial Joys.—As the Tongue requires full Scope, and an eaſy Play, it is lodged in an ample Cavity; and ſurrounded with Reſervoirs of Spittle, always ready to diſtil the lubricating Dews. It moves under a concave Roof, which ſerves as a *Sounding-board* to the Voice; giving it much the ſame additional Vigour and Grace, as the Shell of a Violin adds to the Language of the Strings.

Wiſe—wonderfully wiſe, and eminently gracious, is the Regulation both of *ſpontaneous* and *involuntary* Motion. Was this Regulation reverſed, what deplorable Inconveniencies would take place; nay, what unavoidable Ruin muſt enſue!—*Deplorable Inconveniencies*; if the Diſcharges of the Bowels, or Evacuations of the Bladder, were quite independent on our Leave. *Unavoidable Ruin*; if the Action of the Heart, required the Co-operation of our Thoughts; or the Buſineſs of Reſpiration, waited for the Concurrence of our Will.

The Will, in ſome Caſes, has not ſo much as a ſingle Vote. In others, ſhe *determines* and *commands*, like an abſolute Sovereign; nor is there a Monarch upon Earth ſo punctually obeyed, as this Queen of the human Syſtem. If ſhe but intimate her Pleaſure, the Spirits run, they fly, to execute her Orders; to ſtretch the Arm, or cloſe the Hand; to furrow the Brow with Frowns, or dimple the Cheek with Smiles—How *eaſily*, as well as *punctually*, are theſe Orders carried into Execution! To turn the Screw, or work the Lever, is laborious and weariſome. But We move the Verte-

of the Righteous from the Congregation of the Ungodly. It is then like *choice Silver*, or as a *Tree of Life*.

Who would not bleſs for this the Gift of Speech,
And in the Tongue's Beneficence be rich?

bræ, with all their appendant Chambers; We advance the Leg, with the whole incumbent Body; We rise from our Seat; We spring from the Ground; and, though much Force is exerted, though a very considerable Weight is raised, We meet with no difficulty, We complain of no Fatigue.

That all this should be effected, without any Toil, and by a *bare Act* of the Will, is very surprising. But that these Motions should be made, renewed, continued, even while We remain *intirely* ignorant of the *Manner*, in which they are performed, is beyond measure astonishing.—Who can play so much as a *single* Tune upon the Spinnet, without learning the Difference of the Keys, or studying the Rudiments of Music? Impossible! Yet the Mind of Man touches *every* Spring of the human Machine, with the most masterly Skill; though she knows nothing at all, concerning the Nature of her Implements, or the Process of her Operations.——We walk, We run, We leap; We throw Ourselves into a Variety of Postures, and perform a Multitude of Motions; yet are utterly unable to say, Which Nerve should be active; which Muscle should swell; or which Tendon approximate.

Put a German Flute into the Hand even of a sensible Person: without a Master to instruct him, He is at a loss to make the Instrument speak: much less is He able to sink and soften the Sound, to exalt and extend it, just as He pleases.—Yet We are self-taught in the Method of *forming*, *regulating*, and *varying* the Voice. Naturally, and with unpremeditated Fluency, We give it the languishing Cadence of Sorrow, or the sprightly Airs of Joy; the low faultering Accents of Fear, or the elevated Tone and rapid Sallies of Anger.

The Eye of a Rustic, who has no Notion of Optics, or any of its Laws, shall *lengthen* and *shorten* its Axis; *dilate* and *contract* its Pupil, without the least Hesitation, and with the utmost Propriety: adapting itself, even with mathematical Exactness, to the particular Distance of Objects, and the different Degrees of Light. By which means, it performs some of the most curious Experiments in the improved *Newtonian* Philosophy,

ſophy, without the leaſt Knowledge of the Science, or ſo much as any Conſciouſneſs of its own Dexterity.

I can never ſufficiently admire this Multiplicity of animated Organs; their finiſhed Form, and their faultleſs Order. Yet I muſt confeſs myſelf ſtruck with greater Admiration at the Power, the *truly myſterious* Power and Sway, which the Soul exerciſes over them. Ten thouſand Reins are put into her Hand: ſhe is not acquainted with their Office, their Uſe, or their Name: ſhe has not learnt ſo much as to diſtinguiſh one from another; nevertheleſs, ſhe manages all, conducts all, without the leaſt Perplexity or the leaſt Irregularity: rather, with a Promptitude, a Conſiſtency, and a Speed, which nothing elſe can equal!

Upon the Whole—Great Reaſon had *Euripides* to call the human Body,

Σοφὸν τεῦγος καλὸν ποικίλμα.

I believe, the preceding Obſervations will juſtify us, if we give a fuller Meaning to the Poet, and tranſlate his Words——*The infinitely varied, and inimitably fine Workmanſhip, of a great, ſupreme, unerring ARTIST.* Or, as *Virgil* ſpeaks, with a Pertinency and a Spirit, which epitomizes all I have ſaid, and expreſſes all I would ſay; This bodily Structure is indeed—*non enarrabile Textum* *.

Aſp. Wonderfully. I perceive, *and fearfully are we made* †!——Made of ſuch complicated Parts; each ſo correctly faſhioned, and all ſo exactly arranged ‡; every one executing ſuch curious Functions, and many of them operating in ſo myſterious a Manner, as may juſtly render Us *a Wonder to Ourſelves*.——Since Health depends upon ſuch a numerous

* That is, A Structure, not barely correct, or highly finiſhed, but (as *Theron* has elſewhere expreſſed it) *beyond Deſcription curious.*

† Pſal. cxxxix. 14.

‡ St. *Paul*'s Language on the Subject is exceedingly beautiful and expreſſive, Συναρμολογούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον Eph. iv. 16. The ſeveral Parts moſt nicely *adapted* to each other, and moſt perfectly *harmonizing* with the whole. All *aſſociated* with that Propriety, and connected with that Firmneſs, which are the very Foundation of Symmetry, Vigour, and Agility.

rous Assemblage of moving Organs: since a single Secretion stopped, may destroy the salutary Temperature of the Fluids; or a single Wheel clogged, may put an end to the vital Motion of the Solids: with what holy *Fear, should we pass the Time of our Sojourning Here below* *! Trusting, for continual Preservation, not merely on our own Care, but on that Omnipotent Hand, which formed the admirable Machine. That the same Hand which formed it, may superintend its Agency, and support its Being †.

When We consider the extensive Contrivance, and delicate Mechanism—What Plans of Geometry, have been laid; what Operations of Chemistry, are performed; in a Word, what Miracles of Art and Elegance are executed; in order to furnish Us with the necessary Recruits, and the several Delights of Life—Is there not abundant Reason to cry out, with the same inspired Writer; "*How dear are thy Counsels unto* "*me, O GOD!* Thy Counsels of creating Wis-"dom! Thou hast not been sparing, but even lavish "of thy indulgent Designs. Thou hast omitted no "Expedient, which might establish my Ease; inlarge "my Comforts; and promote, yea complete my bo-"dily Happiness!" And is not this a most endearing Obligation *to glorify the blessed GOD, with our Bodies, as well as with our Spirits* ‡?

Ther. Our Spirits! Ay; what is this Mansion of Flesh, though so exquisitely wrought, compared with the noble and immortal Inhabitant, which resides within?

———*That intellectual Being;*

Those Thoughts, which wander through Eternity §!

This Consideration inclines me to think, that, if the *Casket* be so highly polished, the *Jewel* cannot be so excessively coarse, as my *Aspasio*'s Doctrine of original Corruption supposes.

Asp.

* 1 Pet. i. 17.

† Agreeably to that philosophical Maxim, *Creatio & Conservatio eadem est Actio:* and to those scriptural Acknowledgements, It is GOD, *who holdeth our Soul in Life; He is the Length of our Days; his Visitation prolongeth our Spirit.*

‡ 1 Cor. vi. 20. § Milton.

Asp. I perceive your Aim, *Theron.* But must beg leave, at present, to decline all Overtures for a Dispute. If my Arguments have failed, your Description has answered its End.——I cannot suffer my Thoughts to be diverted from a Subject, which is so very engaging, yet so rarely discussed. I have such a strong Desire to recollect and retain what has been observed, that even *your* Conversation will, at this Juncture, lose its Relish. Here therefore I put a Period to our Discourse, and must break away from your Company, in order to ruminate and digest my Notions, in some sequestered lonely Walk. Unless You will permit me, before I retire, to make one Remark. And let it not startle my Friend, if I venture to say, That, amidst all his curious Observations, He has forgot the principal Circumstance of *Honour* and *Excellence*, which dignify the human Body.

Ther. I have omitted many fine and admirable Properties, I confess. But sure I have not forgot the *principal* and most distinguishing.

Asp. You need not be displeased with Yourself. It argues no Defect in your Dissertation. The Circumstance I have in my View, could never be discovered, by following the dissecting Knife. It is learnt, not from *Cheselden*'s Draughts, or the Tables of *Albinus*; but from the Word of Revelation. What I mean, is This——The human Body was exalted to a most intimate and *personal Union*, with the eternal SON of GOD. He who decorated the Heaven with Stars, and crowned the Stars with Lustre; *HE vouchsafed to be made Flesh* *, *and was found in Fashion as a Man* †. ——Nay, this is, even *now*, the Apparel of that divine and adorable PERSON. He is clothed with our Nature; He wears our very Limbs; and appears in the Dress of Humanity, even at the Right hand of GOD, and at the Head of all the heavenly Hosts.

What think You of another Privilege; mentioned by the Apostle? *Your Bodies are the Temple of the HOLY GHOST* ‡. Not your Souls only, but your very Bodies are the Shrine, in which *the High and Holy ONE, that inhabiteth Eternity*, condescends to

* John i. 14. † Phil. ii. 8. ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 19.

to dwell. HE, who ſitteth between the Cherubim, and walketh in the Circuit of the Skies, is pleaſed to ſanctify theſe earthly Tenements, for his own Habitation. And is not this a *much grander* Embelliſhment, than all their matchleſs Contrivance and n afterly Workmanſhip? Juſt as the *Rod* which budded, and the *Manna* which was miraculouſly preſerved; the ſacred *Oracle* of *Urim* and *Thummim*, with the *Cloud* of Glory covering the Mercy-ſeat; were a much higher Diſtinction to *Solomon*'s Temple, than the moſt heightened Beauties of Architecture.

Nor muſt I omit the Dignity——the tranſcendent and amazing Dignity—which is reſerved for theſe Syſtems of Fleſh, at the *Reſurrection* of the Juſt. They will then be refined and improved, into the moſt perfect State, and the moſt beauteous Form. Surpaſſing whatever is reſplendent and amiable in the moſt ornamental Appearances of material Nature. They will be purer than the unſpotted Firmament; brighter than the Luſtre of the Stars; and, which exceeds all Parallel, which comprehends all Perfection, they will *be made like unto CHRIST's glorious Body* *. Like that incomparably glorious Body, which the bleſſed *JESUS* wears, in his celeſtial Kingdom, and on his triumphant Throne.

When We add all theſe *magnificent Prerogatives*, which are revealed in Scripture, to all thoſe *inimitable Niceties*, which are diſplayed by Anatomiſts, what Thankfulneſs, what Admiration, can equal ſuch a Profuſion of Favours?

When all thy Mercies, O my GOD,
My riſing Soul ſurveys,
Tranſported with the View I'm loſt
In Wonder, Love, and Praiſe!

* Phil. iii. 21.

DIALOGUE XIII.

THE Morning had been wet. At Noon the Rain ceaſed. But the Heavens ſtill continued gloomy. —Towards Evening, a gentle eaſtern Gale ſprung up; which diſſipated the dead Calm, and cleared the Face of the Sky.—The Sun, which had been muffled in Clouds, dropped the Veil. Diſengaged from the duſky Shroud, He ſhone forth with *peculiar Splendor*. His Beams, endeared by their late Suſpenſion, were doubly welcome, and produced unuſual Gaiety.

At this Juncture, *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* walked abroad. They walked alternately on the Terraces; one of which was oppoſite to the Country, the other contiguous to the Parterre—Where the Gales, impregnated with the *freſheſt* Exhalations of Nature, breathed the Smell of Meads, and Heaths, and Groves — Or elſe, ſhaking the Cluſters of Roſes, and ſweeping the Beds of Fragrance, they flung *Balm* and *Odours* through the Air.

At a Diſtance, were heard the Bleatings of the Flock, mingled with the Lowings of the milky Mothers. While more melodious Muſic, warbled from the neighbouring Boughs, and ſpoke aloud the Joy of their feathered Inhabitants.—And not only ſpoke their Joy, but ſpread an *additional* Charm over all the Landſcape. For, amidſt ſuch Strains of native Harmony, the breathing Perfumes ſmell more ſweet; the ſtreaming Rills ſhine more clear; and the univerſal Proſpect looks more gay.

Then was experienced, what *Milton* ſo delicately deſcribes;

If chance the radiant Sun with farewel Sweet
Extend his Evening Beam, the Fields revive,
The Birds their Notes renew, and bleating Herds
Attеſt their Joy, that Hill and Valley rings.

With Wonder and Delight our Friends obſerved, both the exquiſite Beauty, and the immenſe Magnificence of Things.—They were ſtruck with the moſt profound

profound Veneration of that Almighty MAJESTY; who hung the Sun in Vaults of Azure, and clothed his Orb with Robes of Luſtre. Whoſe *Right-hand ſpanneth the Heavens* *, *and ſtretcheth them out as a Tent*, for innumerable Creatures, Worlds, Syſtems *to dwell in* †—Charmed they were, at the Conſideration of the CREATOR's boundleſs Beneficence. Who lifts up the Light of his Countenance, and Joy is ſhed; who opens his munificent Hand, and Plenty is poured, throughout all the Regions of the Univerſe. Inſomuch, that even inanimate Beings ſeem to ſmile under a Senſe of the Bleſſings; and though they find not a Tongue to praiſe, yet ſpeak their Acclamations by their *gladdened* Looks.

Ther. How very different *Aſpaſio*, is this delightful Appearance of Things, from your ill-favoured Doctrine of original Guilt, and original Depravity! Your Doctrine is a Contradiction to the Language of Nature. Nature ſays, through all her Works, "That GOD "is *good*, and Men are made to be *happy*." Whereas, your Opinion would turn the whole World into a vaſt Hoſpital, and make every individual Perſon, a *Leper* or a *Lazarus*.

Aſp. I join with my *Theron*, and with univerſal Nature, in bearing witneſs to the Goodneſs of our GOD. And nothing, I am perſuaded, diſplays it more, nothing manifeſts it ſo much, as the Doctrine of our *Fall* in *Adam*, connected with our *Recovery* in *CHRIST*. —Only in one Particular I am obliged to diſſent It is not my Opinion that *would make*, but the Sin of our Foreſather which *has made*, the whole World an Infirmary, and every individual Perſon a Leper.

Ther. At this Rate, you would croud into that *ſingle* Act of Diſobedience, Evils more numerous, and more fatal, than the Plagues which were lodged in *Pandora*'s Box, or the Troops which were ſtowed in the *Trojan* Horſe.

Aſp. Far more numerous, and infinitely more pernicious.—The Fable of *Pandora*'s Box ſeems to have been

* Iſai. xlviii. 13. † Iſai. xl. 22.

been a Shred of the Doctrine, picked up by the Heathen Wits, and fashioned according to their sportive Fancy. This would, if there was any occasion for such weak Assistance, bring in the *Pagan* Theology, as a subsidiary Evidence to our Cause.—The *Trojan* Horse poured Ruin upon a single City; but the primitive Transgression intailed Misery upon all Generations.

Ther. You have advanced this heavy Charge pretty strenuously, I must confess, but without descending to Facts, or appealing to Experience. All the Invectives are *general* and *declamatory*, none pointing and particular.

Asp. It is easy, my dear Friend, too easy, to draw up a particular Bill of Indictment, and not only to *specify* the Facts, but to *demonstrate* the Charge. Experience, sad Experience, will furnish Us with a Cloud of Witnesses, and prove my Remonstrances to be more than Invectives.

Were we to dissect human Nature, as, in our last Conference, You treated the animal System, we should find the Leprosy of Corruption, spreading itself through our whole Frame. For which Reason, it is styled, by an inspired Writer, "The Old Man *." —*Old*; because, in its Commencement, it was early as the Fall; and, in its Communication to Individuals, is coeval with their Being.—*Man*; because it has tainted the Body, infected the Soul; and disordered the whole Person.

St. *Paul*, describing a profligate Conversation, speaks in this remarkable Manner; *fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind* †. By the Desires of the Flesh, He means those irregular Inclinations, which correspond with the *animal* Part of our Constitution. By the Desires of the Mind, He denotes those evil Propensities, which are more immediately seated in the *intellectual* Faculties. And by both, He very strongly expresses the *total* Depravation of our Nature.

Ther. What You call evil Propensities, I am apt to think, are not really sinful, but appointed for the *Tryal*

* Rom. vi. 6. † Eph. ii. 3.

Tryal of our Virtue.—Nay, since they are confeſſedly *natural*, they cannot be in themſelves evil. Becauſe, upon this Suppoſition, GOD, who is the Author of our Nature, would be the Author alſo of our Sin.

Aſp. Then You imagine, that Propenſities to Evil, are void of Guilt. This is the *Popiſh* Notion, but neither the *Moſaic* nor the *Apoſtolic* Doctrine.—In the Law of *Moſes* it is written, *Thou ſhalt not covet* *. The Divine LEGISLATOR prohibits, not only the iniquitous Practice, but the evil Deſire —The Apoſtle gives it in charge to the *Coloſſians. Mortify your Members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection* †, *and*, which is the Source of all, *evil Concupiſcence* ‡. Now, can *that* be free from Guilt, which We are commanded to mortify? Which, if not mortified, denominates Us Children of Diſobedience, and ſubjects Us to the Wrath of GOD?

Though theſe Propenſities are confeſſedly natural, they may be evil notwithſtanding. The ſacred Writers oppoſe what is natural, to what is ſpiritual. Inſtead of commending it, as innocent; they condemn it, as *fooliſh* ‖, *baſe* §, and *criminal* ¶.—Neither does this make the AUTHOR of our Nature, the Author of our Sin. But it proves, that our Nature has ſuſtained a deplorable Loſs: that it is quite different from its original State: that, what is ſpoken of the *Iſraelitiſh* People, is applicable to the *human* Race; *I planted Thee a noble Vine wholly a right Seed: how then art Thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a ſtrange Vine* *?

However, let Us obſerve your Propoſal: dwell no longer on general Hints, but deſcend to a particular Examination. As our Examination will chiefly reſpect the Soul, let me inquire, What are her principal Faculties?

Ther. The *Underſtanding*, the *Will*, and the *Affections*. Theſe are the moſt diſtinguiſhing Powers, which that Queen of the human Oeconomy retains in her

* Exod. xx. 17. † Col. iii. 5. ‡ Col. iii. 6. ‖ 1 Cor. ii. 14. § 2 Pet. ii. 12. ¶ Eph. ii. 3. * Jer. ii. 21.

her Service.—Theſe, like the ſeveral Diſtributions of ſome ample River, run through the whole Man; to quicken, fertilize, and enrich all his Converſation.—But You repreſent them bitter, as the Waters of *Marah*; unwholeſome, as the Streams of *Jericho*; noxious, as the Pottage, prepared for the Sons of the Prophets.

Aſp. Nor is this a Miſrepreſentation. For, ſuch they really are; till divine Grace, like *Moſes*'s Wood *, like *Eliſha*'s Salt †, or the Meal ‡ caſt in by that holy Man of GOD, *ſweeten* them, *heal* them, and render their Operations *ſalutary*.

The Underſtanding claims our firſt Regard.—This, however qualified to ſerve the Purpoſes of civil Life, is unable to diſcover the Truths, in which *Wiſdom* conſiſts; or to form the Tempers, from which *Happineſs* flows.

Let Us take our Specimen, not from the uncultivated Savages of *Afric*, but from the politeſt Nation in *Europe*.—The *Grecians* piqued themſelves on their intellectual Accompliſhments. They termed all the reſt of Mankind *Barbarians*. Yet, even theſe Sons of Science, *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, were*, in Fact, egregious *Fools* ||.—Not to enumerate the ſhocking Immoralities, which the Poets aſcribe to their Deities. Not to inſiſt upon the groſs Idolatries, which the common People practiſed in their Worſhip. Even their *Philoſophers*, the moſt improved and penetrating Geniuſes, were unacquainted with the very *firſt Principles* § of true Religion. Even they could not pronounce, with an unfaultering Tongue ¶, That GOD IS ONE."

Ther.

* Exod. xv. 25. † 2 Kings ii. 21, 22. ‡ 2 Kings iv. 41.

|| Rom. i. 22.

§ *The firſt of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Iſrael, The LORD our GOD is* ONE *LORD; and Thou ſhalt love the LORD*, &c. *Mark* xii. 29. From which it appears, that the *Unity* of the GODHEAD, is the Foundation of all the divine Commandments, and of all human Worſhip.

¶ *Unfaultering*—For though, in *Plato*'s Book of Laws, We meet

Ther. With regard to the Philoſophers, the Prejudices of a wrong Education, might pervert their Judgment; or, in compliance with the prevailing Mode, they might adopt Cuſtoms, and aſſent to Notions, which they did not thoroughly approve.

Aſp. A poor Compliment this to their Integrity! Had I been their Advocate, methinks, I would have given up the Sagacity of my Clients, rather than their Fidelity to the Cauſe of GOD and Truth.

With reference to the *ſupreme GOOD*, they were equally at a loſs.—There's not one among all the inferior Creatures; not even the crawling Worm, or the

meet with ο Θεος——τȣ Θεȣ——τον Θεον again and again; yet He ſoon departs from this *ſound Speech*, and relapſes into the Language of Idolatry.

A learned and ingenious Friend, would fain have *Socrates* exempted from this Charge.—I wiſh, I could gratify his benevolent Temper, and ſpare that amiable Philoſopher. But, however juſtly He may expreſs Himſelf on ſome Occaſions, at other Times He wavers; He evidently revolts; and is moſt pitiably inconſiſtent with Himſelf.—Even in his excellent Conference with *Ariſtodemus*, where He argues admirably well for the *Exiſtence*, He cannot ſteadily adhere to the *Unity* of the GOD-HEAD.—Nay; in his laſt ſolemn Apology before his Judges, He publickly *renounces* the Truth; declares, that He worſhipped thoſe Gods, which were acknowledged by his Countrymen; worſhipped them, and no other; on the ſame Feſtivals, at the ſame Altars, and in the ſame *(idolatrous)* Manner.—*No other:* theſe are his Words. Ουτε γαρ εγωγε αντι Διος, ϗ Ηρας, ϗ των συν τȣτοις Θεων, ȣτε θυων τισι καινοις Δαιμοσιν, ȣτε ομνυς, ȣτε ονομαζων αλλȣς Θεȣς αναπεφηνα· SOCRAT. Mem. Lib. I. c. i. *Sect.* 11. 24.

Let none conclude, from this or any other Paſſage, That We would conſign over all the Heathens to Damnation. This is as far from our Intention, as it is foreign to the Argument. We are only like Witneſſes, ſummoned to give in our Evidence. From which it appears, that the very beſt among the *Gentiles*, were ignorant of the true GOD; or, if *they knew Him*, in any Degree, *they glorified Him not as GOD*; *but became vain in their Imagination*, and vile in their Worſhip.—*Whether* they ſhall obtain Mercy, or *which* of them ſhall be Objects of divine Clemency, is left *ſolely* to the Determination of their ſupreme, unerring, righteous JUDGE:

—— *Non noſtrum eſt tantas componere Lites.*

the buzzing Fly; but perceives what is *beneficial*, and purſues it; diſcerns what is *pernicious*, and avoids it. Yonder Caterpillar, whoſe Nouriſhment is from one particular Species of Vegetables, never makes a wrong Application to another: never is allured by the Fragrance of the Auricula, or dazzled by the Splendor of the Tulip: but conſtantly diſtinguiſhes, and as conſtantly adheres to the Leaf, which affords her the proper Food. So *ſagacious* are the meaneſt Animals, with relation to their reſpective Happineſs! While the moſt celebrated of the Heathen Sages were, on a Subject of the very ſame Import, mere *Dotards*,—*Varro* reckons up no leſs than two hundred and eighty-eight different Opinions concerning the true Good; and not one of them derives it from the true Source; I mean a Conformity to the ever-bleſſed GOD, and an Enjoyment of his infinite Perfections.

If, on theſe *leading* Points, they were ſo erroneous; no Wonder that they were bewildered in their other Reſearches.

Ther. We are not inquiring into the Circumſtances of this or that particular Nation; but into the State of Mankind in general.

Aſp. Caſt your Eye, *Theron*, upon thoſe Swallows. They ſhoot themſelves, with ſurprizing Rapidity, through the Air. I ſhould take them for ſo many living Arrows, were it not for their ſhifting, winding, wanton Motions.—Are not theſe what You call *Birds of Paſſage?*

Ther. Theſe and ſome other of the feathered Race, are our conſtant Viſitants in Summer; but leave Us, at the Approach of Winter. As ſoon as the Weather becomes cold, they aſſemble themſelves in a Body; and concert Meaſures for their Departure. *Who* convenes the Aſſembly—*What* Debates ariſe—Or *how* they communicate the Reſolution taken——I do not preſume to ſay. This is certain, that not one of them diſlodges, till the Affair is ſettled, and the Proclamation has been publiſhed. Not a ſingle Loiterer is to be ſeen, when the Troops are preparing for their Decampment;

campment; nor a ſingle Straggler to be found, when they have once begun their March.—Having finiſhed their Journey through the Land, their Wings become a ſort of Sails *; and they launch, not into, but over the Ocean. Without any *Compaſs*, to regulate their Courſe; or any *Chart*, to make Obſervations in their Voyage; they arrive ſafely at the deſired Shore. And what is ſtill more extraordinary, they always find the readieſt Way, and the ſhorteſt Cut.

Aſp. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed Times: and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the Time of their Coming: but my people know not the Judgment of their GOD †. The young Ones of thoſe Birds perceive, how abſolutely neceſſary it is, to forſake the Land of their Nativity, and travel in queſt of milder Climes.—But our Offſpring, even when their Minds begin to open, *are brutiſh in their Knowledge* ‡. Born they are, and too long continue, *like the wild Aſs's Colt* ‖. Not only quite deſtitute of heavenly Wiſdom, but ſtupid to apprehend it, and averſe to receive it. *As ſoon as they are born, they go aſtray*, and—

Ther. Go aſtray——To what is this owing, but to the *bad Examples* they behold? They catch the wayward Habit, from the irregular Converſation of others.

Aſp. Is not this a Confirmation of my Point? Why are they *yielding* Clay to each bad Impreſſion? *Caſe-hardened* Steel to every edifying Application?—From imitating

* *Remigio Alarum.* VIRG.

† Jer. viii. 7. ‡ Jer. x. 14.

‖ *Job* xi. 12. How keenly is this Compariſon pointed!—Like the *Aſs*'s, an Animal remarkable for its Stupidity, even to a Proverb——Like the *Aſs*'s *Colt*, which muſt be ſtill more egregiouſly ſtupid than the Dam—Like the *wild Aſs*'s *Colt*, which is not only blockiſh, but ſtubborn and refractory; neither poſſeſſes valuable Qualities by Nature, nor will eaſily receive them by Diſcipline.—The Image, in the Original, is yet more ſtrongly touched. The comparative Particle *like* is not in the *Hebrew*: *born a wild Aſs*'s *Colt*; or, as We ſhould ſay in *Engliſh*, *a mere wild*, &c.

imitating unworthy Examples, You can hardly withhold them, by the tighteſt Rein. But, if You would affect them with a Senſe of divine Things, or bring them acquainted with GOD their Maker, *Line muſt be upon Line, Line upon Line: Precept muſt be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept: Here a little, and there a little* *.——What farther corroborates my Sentiment, is, That all theſe tender Toils of Erudition, are generally unwelcome; are too often unſucceſsful; nay, will always be ineffectual, without the Concurrence of Almighty Grace.

Beſides, *Theron*, if this Propenſity to Evil be obſervable in all Children, it ſeems more than probable, that the unhappy Bias is derived from their Parents, rather than catched from their Neighbours; and owing, not to the Influence of external Examples, but to a Principle of internal Corruption †.—Neglect the Education of Children, and You are ſure to have their Manners evil, their Lives unprofitable. Nay, only remit your Endeavours, and they loſe what has been gained: they ſtart aſide, like a broken Bow. And wherefore this? Why do they not, without the Rules of Diſcipline or Leſſons of Inſtruction, *ſpontaneouſly* addict themſelves to the Exercise of every Virtue? Juſt as the Cygnets in yonder Canal, ſpontaneouſly take

* A great Critic has laid down the following Rule, to be obſerved in fine Writing;

'Tis not enough no Harſhneſs gives Offence,
The Sound muſt be an Echo to the Senſe.

POPE's *Eſſay on Criticiſm.*

Never was this delicate Maxim more nicely exemplified, than in the above cited Paſſage of *Iſaiah*. Chap. xxviii. 13—Another Inſtance of the ſame kind occurs in the ſeventh Verſe. Where the Language ſeems to mimic the *reeling, ſtraggling, giddy* Motions of a Drunkard: while it iterates and reiterates the Idea; expreſſes the ſame Thing, in a different and ſtill different Manner; with an apparent, and, in this Caſe, a ſignificant *Circumrotation* of Words.

† St. *Paul* confeſſes, that He and his Fellow-ſaints were, in their unconverted State, depraved: and this, not διὰ τὴν ἕξιν, by *Cuſtom* or *Habit*, but φύσει.

take to the Element of Water, and the Act of Swimming.

That Bed, in the Garden before Us, will ſuggeſt the Reaſon. It has been digged and dreſſed this very Day. It now lies ſmooth and clean. Not a ſingle Weed appears on its Surface. Yet, how certainly will it, in a very little Time, produce a plenteous Growth of thoſe vegetable Nuiſances? Whence can this proceed? No Hand will ſow them. No Wiſh will invite them. But the *Seeds*, though unperceived by any Eye, are *already* there. Diſſeminated by the Winds, they have mixed themſelves with the Mold, and are ſunk into the Soil.—So, juſt ſo it is with our Children. The Seeds of Iniquity are *within* * them; and, unleſs proper Diligence be exerted by Us, unleſs gracious Aſſiſtance be vouchſafed from Above, they will aſſuredly ſpring up; over-run their Souls; and diſhonour their Lives.

Ther. Let Us leave the Children, and make *Man* the Subject of our Inquiry.

Aſp. In this Reſpect, *Theron*,

Men are but Children of a larger Growth.

We may leave the Veſt or Hanging-ſleeve Coat, but We ſhall ſtill find the Follies of the Child.—In *Youth*, what low Ambition, and Fondneſs for deſpicable Pleaſures.—In *Manhood*, what a keen Purſuit of tranſitory Wealth; yet what a cold Inattention to GOD and Holineſs!——Men, and Men too of the greateſt Abi-

— lities,

* Whoever chooſes to examine the Seeds, the poiſonous Seeds, which are lodged in this *Nurſery* of all Evil, may ſee a Sample of them in our LORD's Deſcription, *Mark* vii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Where He characterize the Heart, not barely of the hypocritical Phariſee, or the abandoned Publican, but of Mankind in general. —After ſuch an Authority, ſhall I mention the Teſtimony of *Seneca?* We are allowed to glean the Grapes, when the Vintage is gathered. In ſuch a View I would introduce the *Philoſopher* after the SAVIOUR. *Omnia in omnibus Vitia ſunt; ſed non omnia in Singulis extant.* De Benef. Lib. IV.

lities, whose Penetration on other Subjects, is piercing as the Eagle's Sight, are, on the most important Points, *blind* as the inwardverned Mole.

Ther. What! is the Understanding like the most *dim-sighted* Animal, when lodged in her darkest Retirement? That sublime Faculty of the Soul; which lends her Eye to all the rest; sits at the Helm, and directs their Motions!

Asp. You remember, I presume, that beautiful Passage in *Milton* *; which Mr. *Addison* so highly admires and so judiciously illustrates. The Passage, I mean, where the Archangel *Michael* comes down, to advertise *Adam* of future Events, and to execute the Sentence of divine Justice.

Ther. I remember it perfectly well.—In the East, the great Light of Day lies under an Eclipse. In the West, a bright Cloud descends; filled with an Host of Angels, and more luminous than the Sun itself. The whole Theatre of Nature is darkened, that this glorious Machine may appear in all its Magnificence and Beauty.——From this radiant Chariot, the *Potentate* of *Heaven* alights; and advances, with a majestic Stateliness to meet *Adam*.

Asp. Should You see such an august Personage, alighting from such a splendid Chariot, and walking amidst the thronged Streets of a City?——Should You behold every One intent upon his Business or Diversions; struck with no *Awe*; paying no *reverential* Regard to this celestial Visitant; what would You think?

Ther. I should certainly suspect, That some superior Power had drawn a *Veil* over their Sight, and hid this wonderful Spectacle from their View.

Asp. Such is really the Case with all Mankind by Nature, and with the Generality of People, during their whole Lives.——GOD, the infinitely great GOD, is in every Place. Yet how Few *advert* to his Presence?——All Nature exhibits Him to their Senses; yet, perhaps, He is not in any of their Thoughts.

The

* Book XI. 203, &c.

The Sun, clothed in tranſcendent Brightneſs, moſt illuſtriouſly diſplays his MAKER's Glory. The Moon, though dreſt in fainter Beams, has Luſtre enough to ſhew Us the adorable DEITY, and his marvelous Perfections. The Stars, fixed as they are at an unmeaſurable Diſtance, and *leſſened* almoſt to a Point, come in with their Evidence, and *magnify* their CREATOR to a gazing but unaffected World.

The Air *whiſpers* his Clemency in the gentle, the refreſhing Gales of Spring. If We take no Notice of this ſoft perſuaſive Addreſs, the Tone is elevated; the Majeſty of JEHOVAH *ſounds aloud*, in roaring Winds, and rending Storms. Yet *both* Expedients fail. Man is like the deaf Adder, that ſtoppeth her Ears. He refuſeth to hear the Voice of the Charmers, charm they never ſo ſweetly, never ſo forcibly.

Each Flower, arrayed in Beauty, and breathing Perfume, courts our Affections for its infinitely amiable AUTHOR.——Not a Bird that warbles, nor a Brook that murmurs, but invites our Praiſe, or chides our Ingratitude.——All the Claſſes of Fruits depoſit their Atteſtation on our Palates, yet ſeldom reach our Hearts. They give Us a Proof of the divine Benignity; a Proof, as *undeniable* as it is pleaſing, and too often as *ineffectual* alſo.

In ſhort; the whole Creation is a kind of magnificent Embaſſy from its Almighty LORD; deputed to proclaim *his Excellencies*, and demand *our Homage*. Yet, who has not diſregarded the former, and withheld the latter?—How few walk, as ſeeing HIM that is inviſible, or have Fellowſhip with the FATHER of Spirits? Though, to walk before Him, is our *higheſt* Dignity; and to have Fellowſhip with Him, is our *only* Felicity?

Ther. This is owing to *Inattention*, rather than to any Blindneſs or Defect in Man's Underſtanding. The many Works of Genius, which have been produced in various Ages, are an abundant Proof of his intellectual Capacity.—Have not the Seas been traverſed,

ed, and the Skies measured? Has not the Earth been disemboweled of its choicest Treasures; while its Surface is beautified with Towns, Cities, Palaces, innumerable?——What fine Arts are invented and exercised; and to what a Pitch of Perfection are they carried; Arts that seem, if not to exceed, at least to *rival* Nature.—It was the Understanding, which formed all these great Designs. It was the Understanding, which contrived the Means, and conducted the Execution.—And are not these unquestionable Evidences of her very superior Abilities?

Asp. Then she is like some great Empress, who conquers half the World, but is unable to rule *Herself.* Who extends her Regulations into foreign Climes, while her domestic Affairs are involved in Confusion. —Do You doubt the Reality of this Remark? Set Yourself to meditate upon the most interesting Truths. How *desultory*, how *incoherent* are your Thoughts?—Charge them to be collected. They disobey your Orders.—Rally the undisciplined Vagrants. Again they desert the Task.——Exert all your Power, and keep them close to their Business; still they elude your Endeavours.

The other Day, I could not forbear smiling at a little Adventure of your youngest Son's. Some *Quick-silver*, which happened to be spilt upon the Floor, parted into several Globules. The shining Balls looked so prettily, he longed to make them his own. But when he offered to take them up, they slipt from his Hand. As often as he renewed the Attempt, so often He met with a Disappointment. The closer He strove to grasp them, the more speedily they escaped from his Fingers. He seemed, at first, to be amazed; then became quit angry, that the little *Fugitives* should so constantly *baffle* his repeated Efforts.—Thus unmanageable I very often find my own Thoughts. If yours are under no better Regimen, this may convince Us both that all is not according to the original Creation.

We apply ourselves to converse with the everlasting GOD in *Prayer.* Here, one would expect to have

the Thoughts all Clearneſs, and all Compoſure. But Here *We are not ſufficient of ourſelves, to think any Thing as of ourſelves* *. All thoſe holy Ideas, which create Reverence, or ſtrengthen Faith, or quicken Love, come from the FATHER of Lights. Should HE withdraw His Influence, all will be dull, and dark, and dead.—It may be, We are ſomewhat enlivened in this ſacred Exerciſe; before We are aware, perhaps in the very Midſt of the ſolemn Office, our Attention is *diſſipated*; and not diſſipated only, but *ſcattered* to the Ends of the Earth. The GOD of all Glory is forſaken, and the Devotion paid to ſome ſenſeleſs Foppery. A Malefactor, begging his Life at the Knees of his Sovereign; and diſcontinuing his Suit, in order to careſs a *Lap-dog*, or purſue a *Butterfly*; is but a faint Image of the Vanity which attends our devotional Services.—Reaſon, which ought to correct theſe Irregularities, is treated like the incredulous Lord; who, inſtead of controuling the unruly Multitude, was overborne by their Impetuoſity, and trodden under Foot †.

Since then the Reins are ſtruck out of our Hands, and We have loſt the Rule over our own Faculties; ſurely, We are in a State different, very different from our primitive Conſtitution.

Ther. However inſenſible to *refined* Speculation, the Underſtanding, when *Intereſt* is in the Caſe, is apprehenſive enough.

Aſp. In temporal §, not in ſpiritual Affairs.—Your younger Brother, *Theron*, is a Merchant. We will ſuppoſe Him at the Sea-ſide; within a ſmall Diſtance of the Veſſel, on which a conſiderable Part of his Subſtance is embarked.—We will ſuppoſe the Veſſel in the utmoſt Diſtreſs; ready to founder with her Leaks, or to ſtrike upon the Rocks—If he diſcovers no Sign of Concern; calls in no Aſſiſtance from the Country; makes no Effort to *ſave* the Crew, and *ſecure* the Cargo; would You not think him bereaved of his Underſtanding, or deprived of his Sight?—Could You conceive

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. † 2 Kings vii. 17.

§ Called therefore by the Apoſtle, *Fleſhly Wiſdom*, and oppoſed to the Grace of GOD. 2 *Cor.* i. 12.

ceive a more favourable Opinion of his Eyes or his Intellect? If, Inſtead of trying every Method to prevent a Shipwreck, He ſhould amuſe Himſelf with picking *Shells* from the Ocean, or drawing *Figures* on the Sand?

We, and every one of our Fellow-creatures, have an Intereſt in Jeopardy, unſpeakably more precious, than all the rich Lading of a thouſand Fleets. Our Souls, our immortal Souls, are expoſed, every Day, every Hour, to the Peril of *everlaſting Deſtruction*. Every Temptation is threatening to their endleſs Welfare, as a Ridge of craggy Rocks to a Ship that drives before the ſtrongeſt Gale.—Yet, how unconcerned are Mankind? Where is their holy Fear? Where their godly Jealouſy? Where their wakeful Circumſpection? Rather, what a *gay Inſenſibility* is obſervable in their Behaviour? Or elſe, what a *lifeleſs Formality* prevails in their Supplications? Their Suplications to that Almighty BEING, who alone is able to ſave and to deſtroy.—Was not the human Underſtanding both darkened and benumbed, We ſhould ſee our Neighbours, We ſhould feel ourſelves awakened, into much the ſame earneſt Solicitude, as the Diſciples expreſſed; when, perceiving the Waves boiſterous, and their Bark ſinking, they cried; *LORD! Save Us! We periſh!*

But alas! in Things of an unſeen Nature, though of eternal Conſequence, *Intereſt*, that habitual Darling of every Heart, loſes its engaging Influence. Nay; when Eternity, all-important Eternity, is at Stake, even *Self-preſervation* is ſcarce any longer a governing Principle——What can be more deplorable? And, if We admit not the Doctrine of original Corruption, what ſo unaccountable?

Ther. This, I muſt confeſs, is true with regard to the unthinking Rabble. To them may be accommodated the Remark of *Auguſtus*; who, when he ſaw ſome foreign Females, carrying Apes in their Arms inſtead of Infants, ſaid to one of his Courtiers, "Have "the Women of thoſe Countries *no Children*, that "they are ſo fond of ſuch deſpicable Animals?"——— The Vulgar are ſo immerſed in ſecular Cares, that One might indeed be tempted to aſk; "Have thoſe

" People *no Souls?* that Buying and Selling, Eating " and Drinking, ingrofs their whole Concern?"—But Perſons of Rank and Education, think in a more exalted Manner.

Aſp. Do you then imagine, that an Elevation of Circumſtances ſets the Affections on Things above? Or, that it is the peculiar Infelicity of the *Vulgar*, to *grovel* in their Deſires?—Gold, I believe, is more likely to increaſe, than to diſſipate the Fog on the Mind. Abundance of Poſſeſſions, inſtead of diſengaging the Heart, faſten it more inſeparably to the Earth. Even ſuperior Attainments in Learning, if not ſanctified by Grace, ſerve only to render the Owner ſomewhat more refined in his Follies.—But Compariſons, between the various Claſſes of Mankind, are as uſeleſs as they are invidious. None, in either Condition, attend to the Things which make for their Peace, till they are *awakened* from their Lethargy, by the quickening SPIRIT of *CHRIST*. And even then We cannot but obſerve evident Indications of much *remaining* Blindneſs.

How apt are ſuch Perſons to miſtake the Way of Salvation? To place their own Works for a Foundation of Hope, inſtead of *CHRIST* the Rock of Ages? Thinking, by their own Performances to *win*, not ſeeking from unmerited Grace to *receive*, the Inheritance of eternal Glory. Which is more abſurdly vain, than to offer Toys as an Equivalent for Thrones; or to dream of purchaſing Diadems with a Mite.—They are alſo prone to miſapprehend the Nature of Holineſs. Are zealous to regulate the *external* Conduct, without attending to the Renovation of the *Heart:* in outward Forms elaborate; with reſpect to inward Sanctity, leſs, if at all exact. A Labour juſt as prepoſterous as to ſkin over the Surface of a Wound, while it feſters at the Bottom, and conſumes the Bone.

Give me Leave to aſk, *Theron*; When our LORD declares *Unleſs a Man be born again, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* *: when he ſpeaks of *eating his Fleſh*, and *drinking his Blood* †: when You hear or

* John iii. 3. † John vi. 54.

or read of Union with the bleſſed *JESUS*, or Communion with the moſt high GOD: is there not a Cloud, if not total Darkneſs, on your Mind *?——How erroneous was the *Pſalmiſt* himſelf, in his Judgment concerning the divine Diſpoſals? *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as it were a Beaſt*, or as the verieſt Beaſt *before Thee* †.—The Voice of Experience therefore will atteſt, what the Word of Revelation has averred; That *the natural Man*, be his intellectual Abilities ever ſo pregnant, or ever ſo improved, *cannot know the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD* §: He has no Sight to diſcern their Beauty; no Taſte to reliſh their Sweetneſs. Nay, though they are the pureſt Light, and the moſt perfect Wiſdom, to Him they appear, not only dark and obſcure, but even *Fooliſhneſs* itſelf.

Would this be the Caſe, if the Underſtanding was not greatly depraved? Should it be difficult for your Ear, to diſtinguiſh the Diverſity of Sounds; or for your Eye, to diſcern the Variety of Colours; would You not conclude, that the Organs were very much *impaired?*

Ther. I think, You have treated the Underſtanding, as *Zopyrus* ſerved his own Body ‖, when he went over

* With regard to the Myſteries of *CHRIST*, the greateſt Proficients are but *Obtuſe acuti*, dull even in their Acuteneſs.——What ſays the wiſe *Agur?* An invaluable Fragment of whoſe Works is preſerved in the Book of *Proverbs*. *Surely, I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of a Man:* even though the following Verſes beſpeak the very ſingular Elevation and Extent of his Knowledge. *Prov.* xxx. 2.—Conformably to the Experience of this excellent Man, I have always obſerved, that the more inlightened People are, the more they lament their Ignorance; the more they pant after a continual Progreſs in heavenly Knowledge; and pray for clearer, ſtill clearer Manifeſtations of the incomprehenſible GOD.

† I queſtion, whether *Aſpaſio*'s Tranſlation comes fully up to the Emphaſis of the Original. The comparative Particle is omitted in the *Hebrew*. *As* ſoftens and palliates the Matter. Therefore the *Pſalmiſt*, to expreſs the deepeſt Senſe of his Ignorance, ſays, *I was a Beaſt*, yea, *the verieſt Beaſt*. בחמות Pſal. lxxiii. 22.

§ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

‖ See ROLLIN's *Antient Hiſt.* Vol. III. *p.* 46.

to the Enemy.—Do you intend to mangle the other Faculties at the ſame unmerciful Rate?

Aſp. That Nobleman *made* the Wounds, which diſfigured his Fleſh. I have only *probed* the Sores, which were found in the Underſtanding. If I have touched the Quick, and put the Patient to Pain, it is only to facilitate the Operation of Medicine, and make way for a Cure.—But permit me to aſk, Wherein does the Excellency of the human *Will* conſiſt?

Ther. In following the Guidance of Reaſon, and ſubmitting to the Influence of proper Authority.

Aſp. The Will, I fear, rejects the Government of Reaſon; and it is undeniably certain, that it rebels againſt the Authority of GOD.

Caſt your Eye upon that *Team* of *Horſes*, with which yonder Countryman is ploughing his fallow Ground. No leſs than five of thoſe robuſt Animals are linked together and yield their ſubmiſſive Necks to the Draught. They have more Strength than twenty Men, yet are managed by a *ſingle Lad*. They not only ſtand in awe of the Laſh, but liſten to the Voice of their Driver. They turn to the Right-hand or to the Left; they quicken their Pace, or ſtop ſhort in the Furrow; at the bare Intimation of his Pleaſure.—Are *We* equally obedient to the Calls, to the Exhortations, the expreſs Injunctions of our heavenly LORD? The bleſſed JESUS ſpoke at the Beginning, and the World was made. He ſpeaks by his Providence, and the Univerſe is upheld. When He ſhall ſpeak at the laſt Day, the Heavens will paſs away, and the Earth be diſſolved. Yet He ſpeaks to Us in his divine Word, and We turn a deaf Ear to his Addreſs. He ſpeaks in tender Expoſtulations, and no Melting of Heart enſues. He ſpeaks in precious Promiſes, and no ardent Deſires are inkindled.——The Will, which, in theſe Caſes ought to be turned as *Wax* to the *Seal*, is unimpreſſed and inflexible as an *Iron Sinew*.

Ther. The human Will is conſtantly inclined to preſerve, accommodate, and make its Poſſe or happy. Is not this the right *Poſition*, in which it ſhould always ſtand? Or the moſt deſirable *Direction*, that can be given to its Motions?

Aſp.

Asp. I should be glad, if Fact bore witness to your Assertion. But Fact, I apprehend, is on the contrary Side.—I took notice, as we came along, of some *Ants* busily employed on a little Hillock. Have You made any Observations, *Theron*, on this reptile Community?

Ther. It is a little *Republic* *. They inhabit a Kind of oblong City, divided into various Streets. They are governed by Laws, and regulated by Politics, of their own. Their Magazines are commodiously formed, and judiciously guarded against the Injuries of the Weather. Some are defended by an Arch made of Earth, and cemented with a peculiar Sort of Glue. Some are covered with Rafters of slender Wood, and thatched with Rushes or Grass. The Roof is always raised with a double Slope, to turn away the Current of the Waters, and shoot the Rain from their Store-houses. They all *bestir* themselves, with *incessant* Assiduity, while the Air is serene; while the Roads are good; and Abundance of loose Grain lies scattered over the Fields.—By these Precautions, they live secure, when Storms embroil the Sky; they want no Manner of Conveniency, even when Winter lays waste the Plains.

Asp. Do *We* improve, so diligently, our present Opportunities? This Life is the Seed-time of Eternity. Do We husband the precious Moments, like Persons sensible of their unspeakable Importance? Sensible, that if We trifle and are indolent, *they* will be irrecoverably gone, and *We* irretrievably ruined.

Sickness, We know not how soon, may invade Us, Pain may torment Us, and both may issue in our final Dissolution. Are We duly aware of these awful Changes, and properly solicitous to put all in order for their Approach?—We walk (alarming Thought!) upon the very Brink of Death, Resurrection, and Judgment. Do We walk like *wise Virgins*, with our Loins girt; with our Lamps trimmed; in a State of continual Readiness, for the heavenly BRIDEGROOM's Advent?

* See *Nat. Displ.* Vol. I.

Thoſe Ants *have no Guide, Overſeer, or Ruler. Yet they prepare their Meat in the Summer, and gather their Food in the Harveſt* *. We have all theſe, yet neglect the Time of our Viſitation.—We have GOD's unerring Word, to guide Us; GOD's ever-watchful Eye, to overſee Us; GOD's ſovereign Command, to rule and quicken Us. Notwithſtanding all theſe Motives, is not the Speech of the Sluggard, the very Language of our Conduct? *A little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, a little more Folding of the Hands to ſleep* †. The moſt ſupine Indifference, where all poſſible Diligence is but juſt ſufficient!—This, You muſt allow, is the true Character of Mankind in general. And does this demonſtrate the *Rectitude* of their Will?

Ther. The Underſtanding may be ſaid to carry the Torch, the Will to hold the Balance. Now, the Perfection of a Balance conſiſts in being ſo nicely poiſed, as to incline at the *leaſt* Touch, and preponderate with the *ſlighteſt* Weight. This Property belongs, without all Diſpute, to the human Will.

Aſp. What? If one of your Scales ſhould deſcend to the Ground, though charged with Trifles, that are light as Air? If the other ſhould kick the Beam though its Contents be weightier, than Talents of Gold?—Is not this an exact Repreſentation of our Will, when the *fleeting* Pleaſures of Senſe, or the *puny* Intereſts of Time, excite our Wiſhes; even while the ſolid Delights of Religion, and the immenſely rich Treaſures of Immortality, can hardly obtain our Attention?—How-

* Prov. vi. 7.

† There is, if I miſtake not, a nice Gradation, in this Speech of the Sluggard; ſuch as very naturally *mimics* the Manner of that lazy Creature.—He pleads, firſt, for ſome conſiderable Degree of Indulgence, A *little Sleep.*—If that is too much to be granted, He craves ſome ſmaller Toleration of his Sloth; A *little Slumber.* If the Taſk-maſter ſtill rings in his Ear, ſtill goads his Side; one almoſt ſees him, rubbing his heavy Eyes, and yawning out his laſt Requeſt; *A little Folding of the Hands* at leaſt *to lie down*, מְעַט תְּנוּם לִשְׁכַּב Prov. vi. 10.—When ſuch is our Conduct with regard to *eternal* Intereſts, how juſtly may We apply that ſpirited Expoſtulation of the Poet;

Tantamne Rem tam negligenter!

However, let Us quit the Metaphor, and examine Fact. Suppoſe, I make it appear, that, inſtead of chooſing the moſt eligible Objects, the Will is ſo deplorably vitiated, as to *lothe* what is ſalutary, and be *fond* of what is baneful.

Ther. If you prove this to be univerſally the Caſe, You will prove your favourite Point with a witneſs.

Aſp. When Providence is pleaſed to thwart our Meaſures, or defeat our Endeavours; to bring Us under the Cloud of Diſgrace, or lay upon Us the Rod of Affliction; what is our Behaviour?—Do We bow our Heads in *humble* Reſignation? Do We open our Mouths in *thankful* Acknowledgments?—Obſerve the Waters in that elegant octangular Baſon. They aſſimilate themſelves, with the utmoſt Readineſs, and with equal Exactneſs, to the Veſſel that contains them. *So* would the human Will, if it were not extremely froward and fooliſh, conform itſelf to the divine: which is unerringly wiſe, and, of all poſſible Contigencies, incomparably the beſt *.—Yet, how apt are We to fret with Diſquietude; and ſtruggle under afflictive Diſpenſations, *as a wild Bull in a Net!*

Ther. This is a very imperfect Proof, *Aſpaſio*, and correſponds only with Part of your Accuſation. We may diſlike what is wholeſome, eſpecially if it be unpalatable, yet not be fond of our Bane.

Aſp. Should You ſee a Perſon, who thirſts after the putrid Lake, but diſreliſhes the running Fountain; who longs for the *impoiſoned* Berries of the Nightſhade, but abhors the *delicious* Fruit of the Orchard, would You applaud the Regularity of his Appetite?—I don't wait for your Anſwer. But I more than ſuſ-

* This ſeems to be the meaning of the Prophet, מישרים ארח קצביק Iſai. xxvi. 7. Not—*The Way of the Juſt is Uprightneſs*—This Senſe, in the preſent Connection, is hardly conſiſtent with Humility: is by no means proper, to introduce a devotional Addreſs to the great JEHOVAH. Rather—*GOD's Way to the Juſt is Uprightneſs*; or, ſtill more emphatically, *Uprightneſſes*. Is in *all* Reſpects irreprovable, excellent, admirable; ſuited, perfectly ſuited, to every ſacred Attribute of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Truth.

pect, this is a true Picture of all unregenerate People. How do they affect Dress and external Ornament: but are unwilling, rather than desirous, to be *clothed with Humility* *, and *to put on CHRIST* †! Amusement will engage, Play animate, and Diversion fire them: but as to the Worship of the living GOD, O! *what a Weariness is it* ‡! This is attended, if attended at all, with Languor, and a listless Insensibility. Frothy Novels, and flatulent Wit, regale their Taste; while the Marrow and Fatness of the divine Word, are "as their sorrowful Meat §." What is all this, but to loathe the Salutary, and long ‖ for the Baneful?

Let me, from the same Comparison, propose one Question more; which may be applicable both to the Will and to the Understanding.—Should You hear of another Person, the State of whose Stomach was so disposed,

* 1 Pet. v. 5. † Rom. xiii. 14. ‡ Mal. i. 13. § Job vi. 7.

‖ The Reader may see this unhappy Contrast drawn in the strongest Colours, by the royal Preacher, and by the mourning Prophet.—*Because I have called, and* Ye refused; *I have stretched out my Hand, and* no Man regarded: *But ye have* set at nought *all my Counsel, and* would none *of my Reproof.* What a Cloud of Words! Emphatically declaring the most incorrigible Perverseness; which is Proof against every Method of Reformation; against all the Arts even of divine Persuasion. *Prov.* i. 24, 25.—*The Host of Heaven, whom they have* loved, *and whom they have* served, *and after whom they have* walked, *and whom they have* sought, *and whom they have* worshipped. What a Heap of Expressions! Significantly describing that impetuous Ardour, which no Prohibitions can restrain; and that insatiable Avidity, which never knows when to say, "It is enough" *Jer.* viii. 2.

If I beg leave to add another Example of this kind, it is chiefly for the sake of clearing up an obscure Passage in the *Psalms*; which seems to have been mistaken by the Authors of *both* our Versions.—*David*, to let forth the barbarous Assiduity of his Persecutors, says; *They wander up and down.* They pry into every Corner; they search the City, and examine the Country; לְאָכֶל not *for Meat*; which, in this Connection, is a Sense quite foreign to the Subject, and very jejune indeed; but to *devour*. To devour me the destined Victim of their Rage. *And if they are not satisfied*, if they cannot compass their Design by Day, וְילִינוּ *they will grudge?* No, but *they will continue all Night*, in the Prosecution of their Purpose. Neither Cold nor Darkness can retard them; neither Hardships nor Dangers can divert them; but their Attempts are as *indefatigable*, as their Malice is *implacable*. Psal. lix. 15.

diſpoſed, that it turned the moſt nouriſhing Food into Phlegm; and derived Matter of *Diſeaſe*, from the moſt ſovereign Supports of *Health*; what would You think of his Conſtitution?

Ther. I ſhould certainly think it very much diſtempered.

Aſp. Without the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, our Souls turn *every* Occurrence into an Increaſe of their ſinful Depravity. Our very Table is a Snare; and inſtead of exciting Us to Gratitude, is a Provocative to Gluttony.—How difficult is it, when We flow in Plenty, not to be elated; when We are preſſed with Poverty, not to repine!—Have We Buſineſs in the World? It cumbers our Thoughts, or tempts Us to Avarice. Have We no Buſineſs to manage? We ſink into Sloth, and ſettle on the Lees of Voluptuouſneſs.—If our Schemes are proſperous, it is odds but they attach Us to the Intereſts of Time. If they prove unſucceſsful, We too often are chagrined with the Diſappointment, and ſin againſt Meekneſs.—Even the holy Commandment, inſtead of reſtraining Sin, or producing Obedience, irritates the inbred Depravity; and renders it more reſtleſs, more impetuous, more ungovernable *.—Thoſe very *Things, which ſhould have been for our Welfare* (ſo malignant and raging is our Corruption!) *are* converted into *an Occaſion of falling*.

Ther. The Will is under no *Neceſſity* of miſemploying her Powers. She is *free* to act in this Manner or in that. And, if a Spendthrift, is not a Slave

Aſp. In Actions which relate to the *animal* Oeconomy, the Will is unqueſtionably free. She can contract the Forehead into a Frown; or expand it with a Smile.—In the *ordinary* Affairs of Life, She is under no Controul. We can undertake or decline a Journey, carry on or diſcontinue an Employ, juſt as We pleaſe. ——In the *outward* Acts of Religion alſo, the Will is her own Miſtreſs. We can read the Word of GOD, or go to the Place of divine Worſhip, without any extraordinary Aid from above.—But in Matters which are

* Rom. vii. 8.

are more intimately connected with our Salvation, the Case is different. Here, as our Liturgy expresses it, "We are *tied* and *bound* with the Chain of our Sins."

Would You have a Person delight Himself in the LORD; take pleasure in Devotion; set his Affections on Things above?——All this is both his Duty and his Happiness. But alas! *He is alienated from the Life of GOD.* His Inclinations gravitate quite the contrary Way. His Will is in the Condition of that distressed Woman, who was *bowed down with a Spirit of Infirmity and could in no wise lift up Herself* *. Corruption, like a strong Bias, influences, or rather like a heavy Mountain oppresses his Mind. Neither can He shake off the Propensity, or struggle away from the Load: until Grace, Almighty Grace, interposes for his Release. *Where the SPIRIT of the LORD is, there* and there alone *is Liberty* †; that sacred and glorious Liberty, which is not the common Privilege of all Men, but the high Prerogative of the Children of GOD.

Would You have a Person apply to the great REDEEMER; apply with a real Ardour of Desire; as *Bartimæus* of old, or the *Syrophœnician* Mother?—His Will is like the withered Arm; cannot stretch forth itself to the all-gracious SAVIOUR: cannot hunger and thirst after his everlasting Righteousness and infinite Merit: till the SAVIOUR Himself speaks Power into the *infeebled*, the *perverted* Faculty.——If You think otherwise; try the Experiment. Persuade Men to this necessary Practice. Urge the most weighty Arguments; devise the most pathetic Expostulations: let Zeal summon all her Force, and Rhetoric employ all her Art. Without being a Prophet, I dare venture to foretel the Issue. Disappointments, repeated Disappointments, will convince You, that our Divine MASTER knew what He said, when He solemnly declared; *No Man can come to Me, except the FATHER, which hath sent me.*

* Luke xiii. 11. † 2 Cor. iii. 17.

me, draw Him * —— Our Church, in Conformity to this and other Scriptures, has taught Us to pray; *Turn Thou Us, O good LORD*; for nothing but thy omnipotent Agency is capable of doing it; *and so shall We be turned.*

Ther. Are We Slaves then? Will *Christianity* send Us to seek our Brethren in the Mines or in the Gallies?

Asp. Christianity does not *send*, but *find* Us there. There, or in a worse Slavery †.—It is doubtless a most abject State, to wear the Yoke, and truckle in Chains. Yet such, I apprehend, is the State of our Minds by Nature. To prove this, We need not go down to the lowest Ranks of Life. *These*, You might say with the Prophet, *are poor; these are foolish; they have not known the Way of our LORD, nor the Judgment of their GOD.* ——*I will get me* therefore *to the great Men* ‡, and examine their Disposition.

Have you not known Persons of the greatest Intrepidity, and firmest Resolution, hurried away by their Lusts, as "a rolling Thing before the Whirl-wind §?" perhaps, they were bold enough to face Danger, and defy the Sword, in the Field of Battle. Yet, were no

* *John* vi. 44. It is not said the FATHER *drives*, but *draws*: not by violent, irrational, compulsive Means; but by clear Conviction, sweet Persuasion, and Inducements suited to a reasonable Being. *Those* are the Cords of a Beast, *these* of a Man. So that We are not acted upon as Clock-work, or influenced as mere Machines, but *made willing* in the Day of his Power, *Psal* cx. 3.

† St. *Paul* says of *Christians*, and reckons Himself in the Number, that naturally they *served* (not διακονουντες but δουλευοντες, were absolute Slaves to) *divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. iii. 3. The whole Verse is very remarkable, and nothing can be more apposite to *Aspasio*'s Purpose. It shews Us, What *They* were by Nature, who through Grace became living Images of the blessed GOD.

This mortifying Doctrine is often acknowledged by our Church. Thus begins one of her public Supplications; *Almighty GOD, who alone canst order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Man.* It seems, We cannot determine our own Wills, nor regulate our own Affections. What is this but Bondage?

‡ Jer. v. 4, 5. § Isai. xvii. 13.

no more able to withſtand the wanton Allurements of Beauty, or the ſoft Solicitations of Pleaſure; than the *Moth* can forbear fluttering about the Flame, even though it ſinges her Wings, and is ſcorching her to death.——Others, poſſeſſed of a refined Imagination, diſdain the groſs Indulgencies of Senſuality; yet are Slaves to their own *domineering* Paſſions. They are blown into the moſt intemperate Rage, and puſhed on to the moſt extravagant Actions, by every little ruffling Accident. They ſee the *Meanneſs*, which ſuch an ungovernable Spirit argues: they feel the *Miſery*, which ſuch internal Tempeſts create: nay, they reſolve to ſuppreſs the Impetuoſity of their Temper: yet, are borne away by the Torrent; and, upon the very firſt Provocation, are as furiouſly reſentful as ever.—Will You call *theſe* Perſons free, becauſe their Taſk-maſters and their Tyrants are lodged within *? Becauſe the Fetters are forged, not for the meaner, but for the immortal Part of their Nature?

Ther. Let Us paſs to the *Affections*. Theſe are to the Soul, what Wings are to the Eagle, or Sails to the Ship. Theſe always ſtand ready to receive the Gales of Intereſt, and to ſpring at the Signal of Reaſon.

Aſp. O! that they did!——But, if the Wings are clogged with Mire; if the Sails are diſproportioned to the Ballaſt; what Advantage will accrue, either to the Animal, or to the Veſſel?—The One will, probably, be over-ſet in the Voyage; the Other will lie groveling on the Ground.

Ther. Deſire ſeems to be the firſt, which "opens "the Mouth, or moves the Wing, or peeps †." Deſire is active as a Flame, and ever in Purſuit of Happineſs.

Aſp. What if your Flame, inſtead of ſhooting upwards, ſhould point its *inverted* Spires to the Earth? Would

* ——————*Inordinate Deſires*
And upſtart Paſſions catch the Government
From Reaſon, and to Servitude reduce
Man, till then free.
MILT.

† Iſai. x. 14.

Would not this be ſtrange, and a Sign of great Diſorder?—GOD is the Centre of Perfection, and the Source of Felicity. All that is amiable in itſelf, is comprehended in G O D. All that is beneficial to Us, proceeds from GOD. Do our Deſires uniformly *tend* to this ſuper-excellent Being? Do our Wiſhes *terminate* in the Enjoyment of his ever-glorious Majeſty? Alas! We are naturally eſtranged from Him: We covet no Communion with Him. We are wedded to Trifles, and dote upon Vanity; but *to G O D we ſay*—it is evidently the Language of our Conduct—— *Depart from Us; We deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways* *

If Deſire is the Firſt-born among the Affections, obſerve it in Children. There it appears in its Dawn, and has moſt of pure Nature.—See, how thoſe *Flies*, exulting in the ſunny Gleam, vibrate with all the Rapidity of Motion their little Wings †. So prompt and expedite are the Deſires of Children to any corrupting Diverſion. — See, how ſluggiſhly that *Snail*, crawling forth amidſt the refreſhing Moiſture, drags her ſlow Length along. So dull, if not reluctant, are the Diſpoſitions of our Children, to any improving Exerciſe. Rewards will hardly win them to the latter; the Rod can hardly deter them from the former.—And None, None but GOD, "by his *ſpecial* Grace "preventing them, can put into their Minds good "Deſires ‡."

Is our *Love* under better Regulation?—How eaſily are We captivated with a fair Complexion and graceful Form; eſpecially, when ſet off with the Decorations of Dreſs. But how little affected with the Beauty of internal Character; with the Ornaments of Virtue, and the Graces of *Chriſtianity?* Can it be ſuppoſed, that the Pulſe of the Soul beats regularly;

* Job. xxi. 14.

† The Wings of a Fly are ſuppoſed to have the quickeſt Motion, of any material Subſtance which lives. And if they make, as Naturaliſts imagine, ſome Hundreds of Vibrations in a Second of Time, I think, there can be no Competition in the Caſe.

‡ *Collect* for *Eaſter Day*.

larly; when there is such a *passionate Fondness* for fading Embellishments, and such a *cold Indifference* for the most substantial Endowments?——How ready are We to be enamoured with well proportioned Clay; often to our apparent Prejudice; sometimes to our utter Ruin! Yet how backward to love that infinitely loving and lovely REDEEMER, who would die Himself, rather than We should become a Prey to Death! Tinder We are, perfect Tinder to the Sparks of irrational and dissolute Affection. Harder than Adamant, colder than Ice, to this heavenly Flame.

Ther. If our Love is blind, our *Fear* has not lost her Eyes. Fear is quick of Apprehension: and, instead of being stupidly insensible, is ready to "rise up at "the Voice of a Bird *."

Asp. The Passion of Fear is sufficiently active, but deplorably *misapplied*.—We fear the Reproach of Men. But are We alarmed at that View of that *everlasting Shame*, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall pour upon the Ungodly? We shudder at the drawn Dagger, and stand appalled at the headlong Precipice. But how often have We defied the Sword of almighty Vengeance, and sported upon the Brink of irretrievable Perdition?

Sin is the most pernicious of all Evils. Sin violates the divine Command, and provokes the Divine MAJESTY. Sin offers Despite to the Blessed SPIRIT, and tramples upon the Blood of *JESUS*. For Sin, the Transgressor, is banished from the blissful Presence of GOD, and doomed to dwell with inextinguishable Burnings. Do We dread this *grand destroyer* of our Happiness? Dread it more than any Calamities, more than all Plagues?——Take one of those fine May-dukes, which glow with so beautiful a Scarlet on yonder Espalier. Offer it to the *Blackbird*, that serenades us from the neighbouring Elm. The Creature, though fond of the Dainty, will fly from your Hand, as hastily as from a leveled Fowling-piece. He suspects a Design upon his

* Eccles. xii. 4

his Liberty; and therefore will endure any Extremity, will even ſtarve to death, rather than taſte the *moſt tempting* Delicacy in ſuch hazardous Circumſtances. —— Are We equally fearful of an infinitely greater Danger? Do We fly, with equal Solicitude *, from the deluſive but deſtructive Wiles of Sin? Alas! Do not We too often *ſwallow* the Bait, even when We plainly diſcover the fatal Hook? *Do* We not *ſnatch* the forbidden Fruit, though Conſcience remonſtrates; though GOD prohibits; though Death eternal threatens?

Ther. Conſcience then, according to your own Account, has eſcaped the general Shipwreck. Conſcience is GOD's Vicegerent in the Soul, and executes her Office faithfully. Even the Gentiles *ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another* †.

Aſp. If there be any Remains of the divine Image, perhaps, they are to be found in the Conſcience. But even this is not exempt from the common Ruin.—— Conſider its *Light*. It is like a dim Taper, feebly glimmering; and ſerving only to make the Darkneſs viſible. Or, if it diſcovers any Thing, it is an obſcure Something, We know not what. Which, inſtead of informing, tantalizes Us; and inſtead of guiding, bewilders Us. As falſe and deluſory Lights on the Shore, put a Cheat upon the Mariner, and lead Him on to Ruin ‡.---Conſider its *Operations*. It is either dumb

* The *inſtigating* Admonition, tranſmitted to *Brentius* by an anonymous Letter, when the Papiſts had formed a Plot againſt his Life, ſhould be the Rule of our Conduct on ſuch an Occaſion; *Fuge! Fuge! citò—citiùs—citiſſimè.*

† *Rom.* ii. 15. Methinks, I would not tranſlate the Word μεταξυ *the mean while*, but *alternately* or *interchangeably* accuſing or excuſing; ſometimes one, ſometimes the other; in Conformity to the different Circumſtances of their Temper and Behaviour.

‡ This ſeems to have been the Caſe with the Bulk of the *Heathen* World. — Conſcience arraigned, and found them guilty. This put them upon practiſing their *abominable*, ſometimes their *inhuman* Idolatries.—Nay, this induced them to give the moſt ſcandalous and impious Miſrepreſentations of the DEITY. That they

dumb or dead, or both. *Dumb*; or else how vehemently would it upbraid Us, for our shocking Ingratitude to the Supreme Omnipotent BENEFACTOR? How loudly would it inveigh against our stupid Neglect of spiritual Interests, and eternal Ages? *Dead*; otherwise how keenly would it smart, when gashed with Wounds—*numerous*, as our repeated Violations of the divine Law—*deep*, as the horrid Aggravations of our various Iniquities.

Ther. Do You call this an Answer to my Objection, *Aspasio?* If it be an Answer, it resembles, in Point of satisfactory Evidence, the Light which You ascribe unto the Conscience.

Asp. The *Gentiles*, You alledge, shew the *Work*, but not the *Love* of the Law, written on their Hearts. Some leading Notices of Right and Wrong they have: some speculative Strictures of Good and Evil. But without a *real Abhorrence* of the One, or a *cordial Delight* in the Other: Which, far from ennobling their Nature, far from vindicating their Practice, argues the exceeding Depravity of the former, and renders the latter absolutely without Excuse.

No? You say, Conscience excuses the Heathens. Rather their Conscience *bears witness* to the Equity of the Law, while their Thoughts *make some* weak *Apology* * for the Tenour of their Conduct. This is far from acquitting, far from justifying them.——Besides, these weak Attempts to excuse, are always founded on *Ignorance*. Did they know themselves, their Duty, or their GOD, Conscience would, without the least Hesitation, bring in her Verdict, *Guilty*. —The Apostle assures Us, that till Faith, which is a divine Principle, takes place in our Breasts, *both the Mind and Conscience are defiled* †. Here, and elsewhere,

they might *sheath* the Sting of Conscience, and find some *Salve* for their own Iniquities, they made even the Objects of their Worship, the *Patrons* and the *Precedents* of their favourite Vices.

* The word is ἀπολογουμένων, not ἐπιμαρτυρουσῶν, not δικαιωσάντων.

† Tit. i. 15.

where, very plainly intimating; that the Conſcience is evil, and ever will be evil, till it is *ſprinkled with the Blood of CHRIST* *.

It *accuſes* ſome, I acknowledge; and it ought to accuſe, yea, to condemn all. But even Here it evidences itſelf to be corrupt. For, its accuſations are ſometimes erroneous †, and no better than falſe Witneſs; ſometimes *partial* ‡, and ſuborned by Appetite; and very, very often *ineffectual*.—Nay, when they do take Effect, they produce no Fruit that is truly good. They work not a genuine Humiliation, or an unfeigned Repentance; but either a ſlaviſh Dread of GOD, as a ſevere Judge; or Hatred of Him, as an inexorable Enemy.

Ther. *Hatred of GOD*——Aſtoniſhing Impiety! is it poſſible for the Human Heart to admit ſuch enormous, almoſt incredible Wickedneſs?

Aſp. You may well be aſtoniſhed, *Theron*; and GOD may juſtly demand; *What Iniquity have my People found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after Vanity* §? "I created You out of "Nothing, and endowed You with an immortal "Soul. As a Father, I have provided for You. As "a Nurſe, I have cheriſhed You.—I have conſigned "over to your Poſſeſſion the Earth, and the Fulneſs "thereof.

* Heb. x. 22.

† *Erroneous*—What elſe was that grand Article in the Accuſations of Conſcience, mentioned with ſuch particular Diſtinction, by *Virgil*;

——Phlegyaſque miſerrimus omnes
Admonet, & magnâ teſtatur Voce per Umbras,
Diſcite Juſtitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos.

For Men to *deſpiſe* ſuch dunghil, worſe than dunghil, Deities, had been their *Virtue* if done, and was their *Duty* to do.—What elſe was that Voice of Conſcience, mentioned by our LORD, *John* xvi. 2. or that, confeſſed by the Apoſtle, *Acts* xxvi. 9.

‡ *Partial*—Otherwiſe, how could the moſt celebrated among the antient Heroes applaud and practiſe, that execrable unnatural Crime, *Self-murder*? How could their firſt-rate Hiſtorians extol and almoſt conſecrate, that diabolical Principle of Action, *Pride*? And how could their ableſt Teachers of Morality, not only tolerate but eſtabliſh the Error, by neglecting to find ſo much as a Name for that amiable Virtue, *Humility*?

§ Jer. ii. 5.

" thereof. All my Creatures do You Service, and " even my Angels minister unto your Good.—Do " You desire greater Demonstrations of my Love? " I have given what was dearer to me than all An- " gels, than all Worlds. I have given my SON " from my Bosom, to die in your Stead.—Would You " have farther Evidences of my tender, my distin- " guished Regard? Behold! I touch the Mountains, " and they smoak: I look upon the Earth, and it " trembles: I cast even the Princes of Heaven, when " they break my Law, into Chains of Darkness. But " to You, O Men, I condescend to act as a Supplicant. " Though highly injured, and horribly affronted, I " *beseech* You, again and again I *beseech* You, to be re- " conciled.'

To hate * *such* a GOD, is indeed the most detestable Impiety. Yet Man, foolish Man, practises this Impiety, whenever, for the Sake of a vile Lust, an ignoble Pleasure, or an unruly Passion, He transgresses the Command of his CREATOR.

Shall I exemplify the Doctrine, in another of the Affections?

Ther. In Truth, *Aspasio*, I begin to be sick of the Subject. If human Nature is so ulcerated, the less You touch it the better.—However, let us not quite omit the *irascible* Appetite.

Asp. Of this we have already taken a Side-view; if You choose to see it in fuller Proportion, make your Observation on *Fervidus*.—*Fervidus* comes home in a Rage. His Cheeks are pale, and his Lips quiver, with excess of Passion. Though He can hardly speak, He vows Revenge, and utters Imprecations.—What is the Cause of all this wondrous Ferment? A Neighbour, it seems, has dropt some reflecting Hint, or a Servant has blundered in some trifling Message. Such Usage, *Fervidus* says, is intolerable; and such Negligence

* Hatred of GOD is so *shocking* an Expression, that one would almost wish, never to hear or read it. But it occurs in our unerring Book; is too often exemplified in common Life; and is engraven by corrupt Nature on every human Heart. See *Rom.* i. 30. *Exod.* xx. 5. *John* xv. 25. *Rom.* viii. 7.

Negligence unpardonable.—This ſame *Fervidus* has offered numberleſs Affronts to his MAKER; He has moſt ſcandalouſly neglected the Will of his Almighty LORD; yet feels no Indignation againſt *Himſelf*.—He is all Fury, when his own Credit is touched. But when the Intereſt of *CHRIST* is wounded, He can ſit unconcerned, or paſs it off with a Laugh.—Anger, I acknowledge, is ſometimes becoming and uſeful. But is *this* its right Temperature? *This* its proper Application?

Ther. This is the Practice only of ſome few turbulent Spirits. To ſaddle *their* Qualities upon *every* Perſon, is a Procedure juſt as equitable, as the Madman's * Calculation was reaſonable; who took an Account of every Ship, which entered the Harbour, and ſet it down for his own.

Aſp. The latter Part of my Charge, I fear, is applicable to more than a few.—However, let Us conſider the moſt *calm* and *ſedate* Minds. How are they affected under Injuries? Do they never aggravate Failings into Crimes? Do they find it eaſy to abſtain from every Emotion of ill-will? Eaſy to love their Enemies, and do Good to thoſe who hate them? Theſe godlike Tempers, if our Nature was not degenerated, would be the *ſpontaneous* Produce of the Soul. But now, alas! they are not raiſed, without much Difficulty; ſeldom come to any conſiderable Degree of Eminence; never arrive at a State of true Perfection. An undoubted Proof, that they are *Exoticks*, not *Natives* of the Soil.

Now We are ſpeaking of Plants, caſt your Eye upon the Kitchen-garden. Many of thoſe Herbs, will perfume the *hard* Hand, which cruſhes them; and embalm the *rude* Foot, which tramples on them. Such was the benign Conduct of our LORD. He always overcame Evil with Good. When his Diſciples diſregarded Him, in his bitter Agony, He made the *kindeſt* Excuſe for their ungrateful Stupidity †. When his Enemies, with unparallelled Barbarity, ſpilt his very Blood; He *pleaded* their Ignorance, as an Extenuation

* *Thraſylus*, an *Athenian*. † Matt. xxvi. 41.

nuation of their Guilt *.—Is the ſame Spirit in Us, which was alſo in our Divine MASTER! Then are our Paſſions rightly poiſed, and duly tempered. But if Reſentment kindles, and Animoſity rankles in our Hearts; this is an infallible Sign, that We ſwerve from our SAVIOUR's Pattern; conſequently, are fallen from our primitive Rectitude.

Ther. What ſay You of the *Fancy?* This ſure, if no other, retains the primitive Rectitude. What Pictures does ſhe form, and what Excurſions does ſhe make? She can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can ſoar to the Height of the Stars; and walk upon the Boundaries of Creation.

Aſp. That the Fancy is lively and excurſive, I readily grant. It can out-travel the Poſt, or out fly the Eagle. But if it travel, only to pick *Shells*; or fly abroad, to bring home *Miſchief*; then, I apprehend, though You ſhould admire the Faculty, You will hardly be in Raptures with its Agency.—This is the real Truth. Our Fancy, till divine Grace regulate and exalt its Operations, is generally employed in picking painted Shells, or culling venomous Herbs. *Weaving* (as the Prophet very elegantly, and no leſs exactly deſcribes the Caſe) *the Spider's Web, or hatching Cockatrice Eggs* †. Buſie in the moſt abſurd Impertinencies; or acting in Speculation, the vileſt Iniquities. That, which ſhould be *a Garden incloſed, a Fountain ſealed* ‡, for the PRINCE of Peace, is the Thoroughfare of Vanity.—And even when We are renewed from above, O! how neceſſary is it, to keep an inceſſant Watch, and exerciſe a ſtrict Diſcipline, over this volatile, variable, treacherous *Vagrant!*

The *Memory*, as well as the Fancy, is impaired; or, if not impaired, is debauched. Why elſe does it ſo firmly *retain* the Impreſſions of an Injury, but ſo eaſily *let ſlip* the Remembrance of a Benefit? Any idle Fopperies, which ſooth our Vanity, and increaſe our Corruption, cleave to the Thoughts, as the vexatious Burr to our Clothes. While the noble Truths of the Goſpel,

* Luke x. xxiii. 34. † Iſai. lix. 5. ‡ Cant. iv. 12.

Goſpel, and the rich Mercies of a gracious GOD, ſlide away from the Mind, and leave no laſting Trace behind them. This double Perverſeneſs is very emphatically, and too truly repreſented by *Jeremiah*; *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Yet my People have forgotten me, Days without number* *.—If We hear a looſe Hint, or read an immodeſt Expreſſion, they are almoſt ſure to faſten themſelves on our Memory. If ſhaken off, they follow Us with a troubleſome Importunity. If excluded, as unwelcome Viſitants, they force themſelves, again and again, upon our Imagination. They dog Us to the Cloſet; they haunt our moſt retired Hours; and too often diſturb our very Devotions.—Tell me now, can that Faculty be upright and uncorrupted, which is a *perforated Sieve*, to tranſmit the Beneficial; but a *thirſty Sponge*, to imbibe the Pernicious †.

Ther. Well, my Friend, whatever Guilt I or Others have contracted, *Flattery*, I dare be poſitive, is none of yours. Human Nature has received no heightening or adulatory Touches from your Pencil. You have pourtrayed Her *fooliſh*, and *beaſtly*, and every Thing bad but *deviliſh*.

Aſp. And this, even this Abomination I muſt not ſecrete, I dare not except.—*Envy* is a deviliſh Diſpoſition. It ſubſiſts no where, but in damned Spirits, and fallen Souls. Yet infernal as it is, it has been found in Perſons of the moſt exalted Character. The magnanimous *Joſhua* felt its cancrous Tooth ‡. The Diſciples of the bleſſed *JESUS* were ſoured with its malignant Leaven ‖. An Apoſtle declares, that *the Spirit which dwelleth in Us luſteth to Envy* §; is impetuouſly prone to that deteſtable Temper.

Lying

* Jer. ii. 32.

† This, I think, ſuggeſts an unanſwerable Confutation of that ſpecious Argument, frequently uſed in Behalf of ſome *faſhionable* but *diſſolute* Diverſions "They are interſperſed, ſay their Admirers, with Sentiments of Virtue, and Maxims of Morality."—Should We admit the Truth of this Plea; yet the depraved Diſpoſition of Mankind, is pretty ſure to drop the Morality, and carry away the Ribaldry.

‡ Numb. xi. 29. ‖ Mat. xx. 24. § Jam. iv. 5.

Lying is confeſſedly a diabolical Practice. Yet, how unaccountably forward are our Children, to utter Falſhood? As ſoon as they are born, they go aſtray; and as ſoon as they ſpeak, they ſpeak Lies.—I ſaid *unaccountably*. But I recal the Expreſſion. The Cauſe is evident. They have loſt the Image of the GOD of Truth; and are become, like that apoſtate Spirit, *a Lyar, and the Father of it* *.

What think You of *Malice*, of *Hate*, and *Revenge*? Are they not each a Species of Murder, and the Seed of the old Serpent? Unleſs, therefore, We are intirely free from all theſe helliſh Emotions, We muſt, *We muſt* acknowledge, that the Prince of this World † has his Party within Us. May the Almighty Hand of our GOD extirpate and ſubdue it, day by day!

You tell me, I am *no Flatterer*,—Should a Perſon, who profeſſes Himſelf the Friend of his Fellow-creatures, ſoothe them into a *falſe* Peace? Should He bolſter them up in a *groundleſs* Conceit of their Excellency, when they really are no better than "an "unclean Thing?"—Shall the Surgeon aſſure his Patient, "All is well;" even when the Mortification has taken Place, and the Gangrene is ſpreading? This were to refine the firſt out of all Benevolence, and to flatter the laſt into his Grave.

A Diſputant of leſs Complaiſance than my *Theron*, would probably aſk, with a contemptuous Sneer; "Have you then been drawing your own Picture?" ——To Whom I would reply, with Confuſion and Sorrow, "I have." Alledging this only, to moderate *my Confuſion*; That I am daily ſeeking, by Prayer and Watchfulneſs, more and more *to put off this old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts* ‡. And, to alleviate *my Sorrow*, I am endeavouring continually to remember; That, however unworthy I am, however vile I may have been, my adored REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs is perfect; and in *this* Righteouſneſs every Believer is to make his Boaſt.

Ther. So then Man is blind in his Underſtanding; perverſe in his Will; diſorderly in his Affections; influenced by Diſpoſitions, which are partly brutal, and

* John viii. 44. † John xiv. 30. ‡ Eph. iv. 22.

and partly diabolical.—I have often heard You extol in Terms of high Admiration, the Virtue of *Humility*, You have laviſhed all the Riches of Eloquence, when haranguing on Poverty of Spirit. If *ſuch* be the Condition of Mankind, they have infinite Cauſe to be poor in Spirit. They muſt, therefore, have *one* Excellency left; and, according to your own Account, a very diſtinguiſhing one.

Aſp. Scarce any thing diſplays, in a more glaring Light, the extreme Depravity of Man, than his ſtrong Propenſity to *Pride*; notwithſtanding ſo much Vileneſs, and ſo many Deformities.—Should the noiſome Leper admire the *Beauty* of his Complexion, or the impotent Paralytic glory in the *Strength* of his Sinews; would they not be miſtaken even to a Degree of Sottiſhneſs and Frenzy? Yet for Man, fallen Man, who has loſt his original Righteouſneſs, which was the true Ornament of his Nature; who is become ſubject to baſe and ſordid Luſts, or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *is earthly and ſenſual*——for *Him* to be proud, is ſtill more abſurdly wicked And ſince this is the Caſe, I cannot acquit Him from the laſt and heavieſt Article of the ſacred Writer's Charge; I have a freſh and more convincing Proof, that We do Him no Wrong, when we call his Nature, his Diſpoſition, his *Wiſdom*—— *deviliſh* *.

Ther. Why do You reckon Pride an univerſally prevailing Corruption? I ſee no Ground for ſuch a diſhonourable Suſpicion. I hope, I *myſelf* am an Inſtance to the contrary. To unguarded Sallies of Paſſion, to ſeveral other Faults, I confeſs myſelf ſubject. But cannot think, that I am proud.

Aſp. Ah! *Theron*, if you were not proud, You would not be paſſionate. Unreaſonable Anger always proceeds from an over-weening Opinion of our own Worth.—One who, beſides his acquired Knowledge of human Nature, had the ſupernatural Gift of diſcerning Spirits, is obſerved to join *Humility* and *Meekneſs* †. Intimating, that they are amiable Twins; and where one exiſts, the other cannot be abſent.—All

* Jam. iii. 15. † Eph. iv. 2.

ways consistent with Himself, He links together the opposite Vices, *heady and high-minded* *: not obscurely hinting, that those who are easily provoked are certainly proud.—Shall I add, without Offence? If we fansy our Minds to be clear from the Weeds of Vanity, and our Thoughts free from the Workings of Self-admiration; it is a most pregnant Symptom, that We are *over-run* with the former; *abandoned* to the latter; and *blinded* by both.

Pride was the first Sin that found Entrance into our Nature; and it is, perhaps, the last that will be expelled.—What are all our Afflictions, but a Remedy provided for this inveterate Disease? Intended to *hide Pride* † *from Man*. What is the Institution of the Gospel, but a Battery erected against this Strong-hold of Satan? Ordained to *cast down every high Imagination* ‡—Though that Remedy is often applied, though this Battery is continually playing; yet the peccant Humour is not intirely purged off, nor the Elatement of Spirit totally subdued, till *Mortality is swallowed up of Life*.

Pride is the Sin, which most easily besets Us *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean* § from this Iniquity! It defiles our Duties, and intermingles itself with our very Virtues. It starts up, I know not how, in our most solemn Hours, and our most sacred Employs. —The good *Hezekiah*, whose Prayers were more powerful than all the Forces of *Sennacherib*, was not Proof against the Wiles of this subtle Sorceress ‖. Even the great Apostle, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, was in Danger of being *puffed up* with Pride. In such great Danger, that it was necessary to put a Lancet into the gathering Tumour; or, as He Himself expresses it, to fix a *Thorn in his Flesh* **, and permit the *Messenger of Satan to buffet Him*.

How pathetically is this Corruption lamented, and how truly described, by "a sweet Singer of our "*Israel!*"

But

* 2 Tim. iii. 4. † Job. xxxiii. 17. ‡ 2 Cor. x. 4. 5.
§ Prov. xx. 9. ‖ 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. ** 2 Cor. xii. 7.

But Pride, that busy Sin,
Spoils all that I perform.
Curs'd Pride! that creeps securely in,
And swells a haughty Worm.

Thy Glories I abate,
Or praise thee with Design;
Part of thy Favours I forget,
Or think the Merit mine.

The very Songs I frame,
Are faithless to thy Cause,
And steal the Honours of thy Name,
To build their own Applause *.

Ther. Now, I presume, You have given the last Touches to your distorted Pourtrait.

Asp. There are other disagreeable and shocking Features. But those I shall cast into Shades, or hide under a Veil. One Particular You must allow me to add; which, like a sullen Air in the Countenance, throws aggravated Horror over the Whole; I mean, An Inclination to be *fond* of our *Slavery*.

In other Instances, *the captive Exile hasteth to be loosed* †. But here We prefer Bondage to Freedom, and are loth to leave our Prison.—Of this, our Backwardness to *Self-examination*, is both a Consequence and a Proof. Self-examination, under the Agency of the SPIRIT, would open a Window in our Dungeon; would shew Us our wretched Condition, and teach Us to sigh for Deliverance.—Why have We such a Dislike of *Reproof?* Because we hug our Chains, and choose Darkness rather than Light. Reproof is more grating than the harshest Discord; though it tends to dissolve the Inchantment; and rescue Us from the Tyranny of Sin. While *Flattery*, which abets the Delusion, and strengthens the Spell is Music to our Ears—Is not our *Reason*, which should arraign and condemn every Irregularity, forward to invent Excuses, and to spare the favourite Folly? Reason, which should unsheath the *Dagger*, super-

* WATTS's *Hor. Lyr.* † Isai. li. 14.

ſuperinduces the *Maſk*; and, inſtead of ſtriking at the Heart of our Vices, ſcreens them under the Cover of ſome plauſible Names. A wicked Habit is called a human Infirmity; inſnaring Diverſions paſs for innocent Amuſement; a revengeful Diſpoſition is termed Spirit, Gallantry, and Honour. Thus our Reaſon (if, when ſo egregiouſly perverted it deſerves the Name) is ingenious to obſtruct our Recovery; and *rivets* on the Shackles which our Paſſions have formed *.

This the eternal WISDOM foreſaw, and therefore uttered that tender Expoſtulation; *How long Ye ſimple Ones will Ye* love *Simplicity*, *and Scorners* delight *in their Scorning*, *and Fools* hate *Knowledge?* Even the ineſtimably precious Knowledge of an all-atoning and completely juſtifying SAVIOUR; who preaches, who has purchaſed, and who works Deliverance—preaches in his Word, has purchaſed by his Blood, and works by his SPIRIT, Deliverance for the Captives—the wretched Captives of Ignorance, Sin, and Death.

This I take to be the moſt *flagrant* and *deplorable* Effect of human Depravity—our Averſion to the Doctrine, the Privileges, the Grace of the Goſpel. Beware, dear *Theron*, leſt You prove my Point by—ſhall I ſpeak it? Would You ſuſpect it?—your own Practice. Zealous as I am for my Tenets, I ſhould be ſorry, extremely ſorry, to have *ſuch* a Demonſtration of their Truth.

Ther. You are highly obliging, *Aſpaſio*, to ſingle *me* out for your Evidence. Yet why ſhould the Honour be appropriated to myſelf? It belongs, upon the Foot of the precedin[illegible] Calculation, not to your Friend only, but to the whole Species.——If you were aiming at None but the Licentious and Abandoned, You would have None to oppoſe You, but Perſons of that Character.

* Perhaps, this is what our LORD means, when, developing the human Heart, and diſcovering its latent Enormities, He cloſes the dark Account with [illegible] *Heedleſſneſs*: implying that *Stupidity*, which has no Senſe of its Miſery; that *Perverſeneſs* which has no Inclination for a Recovery: Ah which render all the other Evils far more inveterate. *Mark* vii. 22.

racter. Your Arrows of Satire, would then be rightly levelled, and might be serviceable to Mankind. Whereas, to put *All* in the black List; to mark *All* with the Villain's Brand; this can never be *Christian* Charity; this is unsufferable Censoriousness.

Asp. Let me beseech You, *Theron*, not to misapprehend my Design. I speak not as a malevolent Satirist, but would imitate the faithful Physician. I am opening the Sore, that it may admit the healing Balm: and should I perform the Operation with an *invenomed* Instrument? My Soul abhors the Thought.—I must intreat You likewise to remember the Distinction, between a State of Nature, and a State of Grace. We are all naturally evil. Such we should for ever continue, did not a *supernatural* Power intervene; making some to differ both from their original Selves, and from the Generality of their Neighbours.—Are they refined in their Temper, and reformed in their Life? I grant it. But then it is the Influence of the sanctifying SPIRIT, which purges away their Dross; yet not without leaving *some Alloy*.

Ther. Here, *Aspasio*, You certainly strain the Bow, till it breaks. Since Scripture itself celebrates some Persons, as absolutely perfect.—What says *Moses*, the inspired Historian? *Noah was perfect in his Generation* *.—Wat says the GOD of *Moses*, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? *Job was a perfect Man and an upright* †—Consequently, *their* Nature must be intirely cleansed, from this hereditary Defilement; and *their* Character confutes your derogatory Representations of Mankind.

Asp. Those eminent Saints were perfect. That is, they were *sanctified throughout*. Sanctified in all their Faculties. No one Grace of Religion was lacking. As in the new-born Infant, there is a human Creature complete: no constituent Part of the vital Frame is wanting: though each is tender; all are very feeble; and none arrived at the full Size.

They were *upright*. This Word seems to be explanatory of the preceding; and signifies an unfeigned

* Gen. vi. 9. † Job i. 1.

Desire, joined with a hearty Endeavour, to obey the whole Will of GOD: excluding not all Defect, but all *reigning* Hypocrisy, and *wilful* Remissness.—The Interpretation, thus limited, is of a Piece with their Conduct. If stretched to a higher Pitch, it is evidently inconsistent with the Narrative of their Lives.

Pray, what was your Motive, for decorating the silvan Retirement, (which sheltered Us yesterday) with the Statue of *Elijah?*

Ther. Because I thought, his solitary Life, and gloomy Temper, suited that sequestered Bower. Because the memorable Adventure, there represented, is, with me, a favourite Portion of sacred History.

Are we pleased with spirited and delicate *Raillery?* Nothing exceeds his pungent Sarcasm, on the stupid and deplorable Dupes of Idolatry. Every Sentence is keen as a Razor, and pointed as a Dagger, yet wears the Appearance of the most courtly Complaisance. We may truly say, in the beautiful Language of the Psalmist, *His Words are smoother than Oil, and yet be they very Swords* *.

Are we delighted with Instances of *Magnanimity?* A single Prophet, unsupported by any human Aid, maintains the Cause of Truth, against the King, his Grandees, and hundreds of the apostate Priests. He ventures to stake all his Credit, to risk his very Life, and (what was dearer to Him than personal Credit, or bodily Life,) the Honour of the true GOD, and Interests of his holy Religion—to risk all on the *immediate* Interposition of a most surprising Miracle.

Do We admire the Triumphs of *Faith?* His Faith was, in a manner, omnipotent. He prays, and *Torrents* of *Fire* descend from the Sky, to devour his Adversaries †.—He prays again, and the Sluices of Heaven are *shut*; there is neither Dew nor Rain for several Years ‡.——A third Time He prays, and the Windows

* 1 *Kings* xviii. 27. And it came to pass at Noon, that *Elijah* mocked them, and said; *Cry aloud; for he is a God. Either He is talking, or He is pursuing, or He is in a Journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked.*

† 2 Kings i. 10. ‡ 1 Kings xvii. 1.

dows from on High are *opened*; Abundance of Showers water the Earth *——On another Occasion he presents his Supplications, and GOD makes his Feet like Hart's Feet. Insomuch that an aged Prophet *outruns* the royal Chariot †

Asp I commend your Taste, *Theron*: and am particularly pleased with the Reasons of your Choice.—But do you not remember, that even the Wonder-working *Tishbite* failed in his Resignation, and failed in his Faith? Eminent as He was for Mortification, He gave way to *unreasonable* Discontent; and, though a Champion for the living GOD, He yielded to *unbelieving* Fear ‡—*The Man Moses was very meek, above all the Men which were upon the Face of the Earth* §: Yet He, even He, was provoked in his Spirit, and spake unadvisedly with his Lips ‖.—Was not *Peter* the Hero among our LORD's Followers? Yet He trembles, more than trembles, at the shaking of a Leaf; He denies his Divine MASTER, feared by the Voice of a Woman.

Look where-ever We will, We find Proofs of human Depravity; reigning *uncontrouled* in Some, making frequent *Insurrection* in All. It is written on our own Hearts, by the Pen of Experience; the Finger of Observation points it out, in the Practice of Others—Even in the Practice of *Those*, who have been Saints of the first Rank, and of the highest Endowments. Yet they were defective.—Defective too, in *that very* Quality, which was their distinguishing Gift; in which they particularly excelled.

* Jam. v. 17, 18. † 1 Kings xviii. 46.

‡ *Elias*, or rather *Elijah*, *was a Man subject to like Passions as We are.* Jam. v. 17. Upon which Passage, an eminent Commentator makes the following Remark; "This probably is said, "with respect to his *Fear*, and *Discontent*, manifested 1 *Kings* xix. "3, 4."——Ὁμοιοπαθὴς must, I think, imply a State, liable to the *irregular* Workings of Passion; not free from the *sinful* infirmities of Nature. Otherwise, it is an Instance foreign to the Purpose; does by no means answer the End designed; which is to encourage the Heart, and strengthen the Faith, even of *frail, corrupt, offending* Creatures. See *Ver.* 16.

§ Numb. xii. 3. ‖ Psal. cvi. 33.

Ther. While We are talking, the Day has inſenſibly ſtole itſelf away, and left Us ſurrounded with *Twilight*. Which is a Sort of Luſtre intermingled with Darkneſs: no Part wholly lucid; no Part wholly obſcure —An Emblem, according to your Repreſentation, of the renewed Soul, and its imperfect Holineſs

Aſp. A very juſt one ——Even where the Goſpel ſhines, ſtill there is an *intercurrent* Gloom of Corruption. Ignorance mixes itſelf with our Knowledge. Unbelief cleaves to our Faith. Nor is our Purity free from all Contamination.——The Prophet *Zechariah*, foretelling the Eſtabliſhment of the Goſpel Kingdom, and deſcribing the State of its ſpiritual Subjects, ſays; *It ſhall come to paſs in that Day, that the Light ſhall not be clear, nor dark* *. This, as to its *literal* Senſe, We now ſee exemplified in the circumambient Atmoſphere. With regard to its *ſpiritual* Meaning, every true Believer feels it accompliſhed in his own Breaſt.

Ther. While You are ſo vehement, in decrying all human Attainments; conſider, *Aſpaſio*, whether You do not *check* and *diſpirit* Us, in the Purſuit of exalted Virtue.

Aſp. I ſuppoſe, you never expected to be ſuch an Adept in Geometry as *Archimedes*, nor ſo profound an Aſtronomer as *Newton*; yet this did not check your Application to the Study of Mathematics, or the Contemplation of the Heavens.——Your Brother the Merchant, I preſume, has no Proſpect of amaſſing the Wealth of a *Craſus*, or the immenſe Treaſures of a *Kouli Khan*; yet this does not diſpirit Him in proſecuting the Buſineſs, which brings him both Opulence and Honour.

However, *Theron*, ſo long as you deny the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, I muſt acknowledge, You act a conſiſtent Part, in being zealous for the Perfection of perſonal Obedience. You ought either to *acquire* the One, or to *accept* the Other. There-

* *Zech.* xiv. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. *For We know in Part.* Perhaps this Declaration of the Apoſtle may be a Key to the Prophet's Meaning. However, it is a ſufficient Confirmation of *Aſpaſio*'s Sentiment.

Therefore, I ſhall produce no more Arguments for your Diſcouragement; but ſhall compriſe the Whole of my Anſwer, in the Motto to an *Iriſh* Nobleman's Arms, TRY. Or, if this be too conciſe, I will ſubjoin, with a very little Alteration, the Words of a King; "When you have attained what You purſue, "*bring me Word again, that I may go, and poſſeſs it* "*alſo* *."

Ther. According to your Account, the moſt advanced and eſtabliſhed Chriſtians, are but like a Company of *Invalids*. Does not this extremely derogate from the Honour of our LORD, conſidered as the *Phyſician* of Souls? It ſeems to make a mere Nothing of Sanctification; and would ſwallow up *CHRIST* the King, in *CHRIST* the Prieſt.

Aſp. Invalids they are †; and ſuch will continue, till they are diſmiſſed from this great Infirmary, and admitted into that holy, happy, bleſſed World; where *the Inhabitant ſhall no more ſay, I am* either in Soul or in Body *ſick* ‡.

If the Cure was *never* to be completed, this doubtleſs would be diſhonourable to our Almighty PHYSI-

 CIAN.

* Matt. ii. 8.

† Do not the *beſt* of Men lament their Ignorance of the divine Perfections, their Slowneſs of Heart to believe the divine Promiſes, and the Languor of their Gratitude for inеſtimable, for innumerable Gifts of the divine Goodneſs?—Do they not frequently feel Deadneſs in their Devotions, Diſorder in their Affections, and various other Relics of the original Leaven?—Do they not often complain, in the Language of the Apoſtle, *When I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me?* And ſay with the earlieſt *Chriſtians*, *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened.* Burdened, not ſo much with Affliction: thoſe Heroes in *Chriſtianity* had learnt, to *rejoice in Tribulation.* But burdened with a Senſe of their ſpiritual Infirmities, and with the Workings of their inbred Corruption. Which, to a tender and lively Believer, are the *heavieſt* of Croſſes, and the *moſt galling* of Loads. Nay; do not the Heirs of Glory *waſh their very Robes*, even their faireſt Deeds, and their brighteſt Graces, *in the Blood of the LAMB?* Which, if they were free from Spot, and void of Impurity, need not be *made white* in this ſacred Fountain. See 2 *Cor.* v. 4. *Rev.* vii. 14.

‡ Iſai. xxxiii. 24.

CIAN. But the ſpiritual Recovery, begun on Earth, and advancing through Time, will be perfected in Heaven, and prolonged to Eternity.—Does this make a mere Nothing of Sanctification? No, but it makes Room for a continual *Progreſs*, and affords Cauſe for continual *Humiliation*. It reſerves a moſt exalted Prerogative, for the heavenly State and beatific Viſion; and perpetually reminds Us of a moſt important Truth, That our preſent Bleſſedneſs conſiſts, not in being *free* from *all* Sin, but in having *no* Sin *imputed* to Us *.

This Imperfection of our Obedience, inſtead of confounding, maintains a proper *Diſtinction* between *CHRIST* the King, and *CHRIST* the Prieſt. Whereas, if We were perfect in Piety, the prieſtly Office, with regard to Us, would be ſuperſeded. What Need of an Interceſſor, to recommend our Prayers? What Occaſion for an High-Prieſt, to *bear the Iniquity of our holy Things* †? If ſome Taint of the original Leaven did not pollute our beſt Services?

Neither does this detract from the Wiſdom, from the Goodneſs, or from the Power of *CHRIST*. It rather adminiſters to the advantageous Diſplay of all theſe divine Attributes.—Of his *Wiſdom*; in conducting the Affairs of his Church with ſuch exact Propriety, that the Righteouſneſs of Faith may have its due Honour, and the Sanctification of the SPIRIT its proper Eſteem.—Of his *Goodneſs*; in carrying on the Work of Grace, amidſt ſo much Infirmity, and ſo many Corruptions; and in crowning, with conſummate Happineſs, ſuch frail undeſerving Creatures.—Of his *Power*; in extracting a Variety of Benefits even from—

Ther. Benefits, Aſpaſio!—Can any thing beneficial proceed from an Evil, which, according to your own Repreſentation, is ſo incorrigibly malignant?

Aſp. It will tend to make Us *lowly in our own Eyes*, When we remember, that by Nature we are altogether

* Pſal. xxxii. 2.

† *Exod.* xxviii. 38. *Id eſt, expiare Peccata, quibus ſanctiſſimæ cæteroquin Actiones noſtræ inquinatæ ſunt.* WITS. De Oecon.

gether become abominable; that the Remains of natural Depravity ſtill adhere to our Minds; how muſt ſuch a View of Ourſelves cover Us with Shame, and lay Us low in Abaſement! *Leſs than the leaſt of all thy Mercies* *, will be the Language of ſuch a One's very Soul.

It will diſpoſe Us to *compaſſionate Others.* How can We take a Brother by the Throat, and require faultleſs Perfection in his Behaviour, when We Ourſelves in many Things offend, in all Things fall ſhort? Every ſuch Conſideration rebukes, what I may call ſpiritual Unmercifulneſs; it pleads for Tenderneſs and Forbearance to our Fellow-creatures; is a Monitor within, and whiſpers that affecting Remonſtrance, *Oughteſt not Thou to have Compaſſion upon thy Fellow-ſervant, ſince thy Almighty LORD hath* ſuch renewed, ſuch unwearied, *Pity on Thee* †?

It will teach Us to admire the *Riches* of *Grace.* Shall fallen Creatures, that are taken from the very Dunghills of Sin, and reſcued from a Hell of inward Iniquity—Shall *they*, notwithſtanding their deplorable Depravity, and innumerable Deficiencies—Shall *they* be admitted into the Boſom of eternal Love? *They* be exalted to the Thrones of Glory, and numbered with the Princes of Heaven? This is Grace, tranſcendently rich, and divinely free indeed!

Will it not *reconcile* Us to the Approach of *Death?* This, methinks, like Wormwood on the Nipple, or Gall in the Cup, muſt tend to wean Us from the World. How can We be enamoured with ſuch a Land of Darkneſs, and ſuch a Vale of Tears? Or why ſhould We covet, when Providence gives the Signal for our Departure, to prolong our Abode in theſe Territories of *Diſorder?*—Surely, this muſt incline Us to leave them, every Day, more and more in our Affections; and at laſt, to leave them, without any Reluctance, by final Diſſolution. Leave them, for that better Country, where our perſonal Righteouſneſs will no longer be defective, like the *waning* Moon; but

* Gen. xxxii. 10. † Matt. xviii. 33.

but shine forth with consummate Lustre, like the *meridian* Sun, in the Kingdom of our FATHER.

It will *endear* the Blessed *JESUS* in *every* Capacity; as the Stings of the fiery flying Serpents, and the Dearth of the waste howling Wilderness, endeared to the *Israelites* both their miraculous Antidote, and their Bread from Heaven.——They who believe this Truth, must see their inexpressible and incessant Need of *CHRIST*'s Spirit. The Protestation of *Moses*, on a particular Occasion, will be the daily, the hourly Breathing of their Souls; *Carry Us not up hence, unless thy Presence*, thy SPIRIT *go with Us* *. For without this Aid, We can discharge no Duty aright, nor successfully resist any Temptation.——They will be exceedingly cautious, not to *grieve* † that sacred Guest, lest He depart from them, and abandon them to the Power of their lurking Corruptions. Knowing, that if *He* abandon them, when such Foes are within, and so many Snares without; their Case will be worse than *Samson*'s, when his Locks were shaven, and the *Philistines* all around Him.

How highly will such Persons value the *Blood* of the Covenant, and the *Intercession* of their great HIGH-PRIEST!——They will no more presume to enter into the Presence of the most High GOD, without a fiducial Reliance upon the atoning and interceding *SAVIOUR*; than the Sons of *Jacob* would have ventured to appear before the Viceroy of *Egypt*, without the Company of their younger Brother ‡. In all, in all their Intercourse with Heaven, the great PROPITIATION will be their Plea, and the great ADVOCATE their Confidence.——The impotent Man waited at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and the *Syrian* General dipped seven Times in *Jordan*. These Persons will not only *wait*, but *live* by the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanness §. They will wash in the sacred sanctifying Stream, not *seven* Times only, but *seventy Times* seven.

And

* Exod. xxxiii. 15.
† Eph. iv. 30.
‡ Gen. xliii. 5.
§ Zech. xiii. 1.

And when such Sentiments possess the Mind, how dear! O how *dear* and *desireable* will our LORD's Obedience be!——I called, sometime ago, our own Works *Worm-eaten Things*; and must not these Corruptions, if they remain ever so little in the Heart, tarnish our Graces, and debase our Duties? Must they not be depreciatory to all our Accomplishments; and too much like *corroding Vermin*, in the Substance of our Timber, or at the Core of our Fruits?—Should We not then renounce, utterly renounce, these tarnished, worm-eaten Things? And rely, wholly rely, for everlasting Acceptance, on our Divine HIGH-PRIEST? Who, in his mediatorial Works, as well as in his wonderful Person, is altogether *Light* and *Perfection* *; and neither in Him, nor in them, is there any Deficiency or any Darkness at all.

Excuse me, *Theron*; I fear, I have been preaching. The Importance of the Text, must form my Apology. It is an *Introduction*, not to the Records of History, or the Transactions of Philosophy, but to the Riches of *CHRIST*.

Ther. If my *Aspasio* has been preaching, I can assure Him for his Comfort, that his Audience has been very attentive; and though the Sermon was somewhat copious, the Hearer neither slept nor gaped.—However, I should be glad to have the Whole reviewed, and summed up: that, if it has been large as the Pyramid, it may, like the Pyramid, terminate in a *Point*.

Asp.

* *Light and Perfection*—This is the Meaning of that mysterious Ornament, which, in the grand officiating Robes of the *Jewish* High-Priest, was annexed to the Breast-Plate, and styled *Urim* and *Thummim*. Only the *Hebrew* Words are in the plural Number, and denote *every Degree* of Illumination, and *all Kinds* of Perfection.———Does not this very significantly teach Sinners, Whence to seek their Wisdom, and Where to look for their Perfection? There never was, in all Ages, more than one *Urim* and *Thummim*; and only one Person, in each Generation, was appointed to wear it. And who is there, in all Worlds, that can give Us heavenly Knowledge, but the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*? What is there, in Ourselves or all Creatures, that can present Us unblameable before GOD, but the Obedience of *CHRIST*?

Asp. This then is the State of our Nature——The Image of the CREATOR is loſt: Blindneſs is in the Underſtanding: Diſorder in all the Affections.—In the Will, Enmity againſt GOD, the ſovereign Good: Inability to all that is ſpiritual and heavenly: with a Propenſity to whatever is ſordid and earthly.—The whole Soul is deformed, diſtempered, rebellious.——And ſhall ſuch a Creature lay claim to thoſe amiable and ſacred Endowments, which may be a *proper Recommendation* to infinite Holineſs?—Is ſuch a Creature qualified to perform thoſe righteous Acts, which may approve themſelves to the *Demand* of GOD's Law, and to the *Inflexibility* of his Juſtice.

Should he conceive the vain Hope, or make the vainer Attempt, I would now addreſs Him, as *Jehoaſh* formerly anſwered *Amaziah*.—*Amaziah* King of *Judah*, elated with the little Victories he had obtained over the *Edomites*, began to fanſy Himſelf invincible. Prompted by this fooliſh Imagination, He challenges *Jehoaſh* King of *Iſrael*, to meet Him in a pitched Battle; and receives this ironical Apologue, by way of Reply.———Which, for Gallantry of Spirit and Delicacy of Wit, for Poignancy of Satire and Propriety of Application, has ſeldom been equaled, perhaps never exceeded—*The Thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife: and there paſſed by a wild Beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trod down the Thiſtle* *. What are We—when We offer to eſtabliſh our own Righteouſneſs, or preſume to juſtify Ourſelves before the moſt High GOD—but *deſpicable Thiſtles*, that fanſy themſelves *ſtately Cedars?* And is not every Temptation, is not each Corruption, a wild Beaſt of the Deſart, which will trample on the impotent Boaſter, and tread his haughty Pretenſions in the Duſt?

* 2 Kings xiv. 9.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XIV.

ASPASIO was employed in preparing for his Journey. *Theron*, free from Buſineſs, and diſengaged from Company, had the greateſt Part of the Day to Himſelf. Which he ſpent, in *reviewing* the Subſtance of their late Conferences; not without intermingled Aſpirations to GOD, for the Guidance of his Divine SPIRIT.

At Evening, He *went*, like the Patriarch of old, *into the Field to meditate* *: amidſt the Calm of Nature to meditate on the Grace of the Goſpel.——The Sky was peculiarly beautiful, and perfectly clear; only where the fine *Indigo* received an agreeable Heightening, by a few thin and ſcattered Clouds; which imbibed the ſolar Rays, and looked like penſile Fleeces of pureſt *Wool*.—All Things appeared with ſo mild, ſo majeſtic, ſo charming an Aſpect, that, intent as he was upon a different Subject, He could not but indulge the following Soliloquy.

" How delightful are the Scenes of rural Nature! " Eſpecially, to the *philoſophic* Eye, and *contemplative* " Mind.——I cannot wonder, that Perſons in high " Life, are ſo fond of retiring from a conſpicuous and " exalted Station, to the Covert of a ſhady Grove, " or the Margin of a cooling Stream. Are ſo deſirous " of quitting the ſmoky Town, and noiſy Street; in " order to breathe purer Air, and ſurvey the Won- " ders of Creation, in the ſilent, the ſerene, the peace- " ful *Villa*."

" 'Tis true, in the Country, there are none of the " modiſh, I had almoſt ſaid, meretricious Ornaments " of that *falſe* Politeneſs, which refines People out of " their Veracity. But an eaſy Simplicity of Manners, " with an unaffected Sincerity of Mind.———Here, " the ſolemn Farce of Ceremony is ſeldom brought " into Play; and the pleaſing Deluſions of Compli-

" ment

* Gen. xxiv. 63.

" ment have no Place. But the Brow is the *real* In-
" dex of the Temper, and Speech the *genuine* Inter-
" preter of the Heart."

" In the Country, I acknowledge, We are ſeldom
" invited to ſee the *mimick* Attempts of human Art.
" But We, every where, behold the grand and ma-
" ſterly Exertions of divine Power. No *Theatre*
" erects its narrow Stage; ſurrounds it, with puny
" Rows of aſcending Seats; or adorns it, with a ſhift-
" ing Series of gorgeous Scenery. But *Fields* extend
" their ample Area; at firſt, lightly clad with a Scarf
" of ſpringing Green; then, deeply planted with an
" Arrangement of ſpindling Stalks; as a few more
" Weeks advance, covered with a Profuſion of beard-
" ed or huſky Grain; at laſt, richly laden with a Har-
" veſt of yellow Plenty."

" *Meadows* diſcloſe their beautiful Boſoms, yield a
" ſoft and fertile Lap for the luxuriant Herbage; and
" ſuckle Myriads of the faireſt, gayeſt Flowers. Which,
" without any vain Oſtentation, or expenſive Finery,
" outvie each other in all the Elegance of Dreſs.——
" *Groves* of various Leaf; arrayed in freſheſt Verdure,
" and liberal of their reviving Shade; riſe, in amia-
" ble, in noble Proſpect, all around——*Droves* of
" ſturdy Oxen, ſtrong for Labour, or fat for the
" Shambles; *Herds* of ſleeky Kine, with Milk in their
" Udders, and Violets in their Noſtrils; *Flocks* of
" well-fleeced Sheep, with their ſnowy Lambkins,
" ſtriking at their Side; theſe compoſe the living
" Machinery.——Boundleſs Tracts of bending *A-*
" *zure*, varniſhed with inimitable Delicacy, and hung
" with ſtarry Lambs, or irradiated with ſolar Luſtre,
" form the ſtately Cieling—While the early Breezes,
" and the evening Gales; charged with no unwhole-
" ſome Vapours, breeding no peſtilential Taint; but
" fanning the humid Buds, and waving their odorife-
" rous Wings, diſpenſe a thouſand *Sweets*, mingled
" with the moſt ſovereign Supports of Health.——
" And is not this School of Induſtry, this Magazine of
" Plenty, incomparably *more delightful* as well as in-
" finitely *leſs dangerous* than thoſe gaudy Temples of
" Profuſe-

" Profuſeneſs and Debauchery, where Sin and Ruin " wear the Maſk of Pleaſure? Where *Belial* is daily " or nightly worſhipped with, what his Votaries call, " modiſh Recreation, and genteel Amuſement?"

" Here indeed is no tuneful *Voice*, to melt in Strains " of amorous Anguiſh, and transfuſe the ſickening " Fondneſs to the Hearer's Breaſt. No ſkilful Artiſt, " to inform the *Lute* with muſical Inchantment; to " ſtrike infectious Melody from the Viol; and ſooth " away the Reſolution and Activity of Virtue, in " wanton Deſires, or voluptuous Indolence.——But " the *Plains* bleat; the *Mountains* low; and the hol- " low circling *Rocks* echo with the univerſal Song. " Every Valley remurmurs to the Fall of Silver Foun- " tains, or the liquid Lapſe of gurgling Rills.—*Birds*, " Muſicians ever beauteous, ever gay, perched on a " thouſand Boughs, play a thouſand ſprightly and har- " monious Airs."

" Charmed therefore with the fineſt Views; lulled " with the ſofteſt Sounds; and treated with the rich- " eſt Odours; what can be wanting to complete the " Delight? Here is *every* Entertainment for the Eye; " the moſt *refined* Gratifications for the Ear; and a " *perpetual* Banquet for the Smell; without any inſi- " dious Decoy, for the Integrity of our Conduct, or " even for the Purity of our Fancy.

" O ye blooming Walks and flowery Lawns, ſur- " rounded with dewy Landſcapes! How often have " *Patriots* and *Heroes*, laid aſide the Burden of Power, " and ſtole away from the Glare of Grandeur, to en- " joy themſelves * in your compoſed Retreats!—— " Ye moſſy Couches, and fragrant Bowers, ſkirted " with cooling Caſcades! How many *illuſtrious* Per- " ſonages, after all their glorious Toil for the public " Good, have ſought an honourable and welcome Re- " poſe in your downy Lap †?——Ye venerable Oaks,

" and

* ——————*Mihi me reddentis Agelli*,

ſays *Horace* of his little Country-ſeat.

† *Virgil* was ſo ſmitten with the Amiableneſs of theſe Scenes, that He aſſigns them as an Habitation for happy Spirits, in the Regions of *Elyſium*,

" and ſolemn Groves; Woods that whiſper to the " quivering Gale; Cliffs, that over-hang the darkened " Flood; Who can number the *Sages* and *Saints*, that " have devoted the Day to Study, or reſigned a vacant " Hour to healthy Exerciſe, beneath your ſilvan Por- " ticos, and waving Arches? That, far from the " dull Impertinence of Man, have liſtened to the in- " ſtructive Voice of GOD; and contemplated the " Works of his adorable Hand, amidſt your moſs- " grown Cells, and rocky Shades.——How *inele-* " *gant* or how *inſenſible* is the Mind, which has no " awakened lively Reliſh for theſe ſweet Receſſes, " and their exquiſite Beauties!"

But whither am I carried? Is not this *rural Enthuſiaſm?* I find myſelf talking to Trees; and forget the momentous Queſtion, which waits for our Deciſion. Here then let my Rhapſody ceaſe, and my Inquiry proceed.——Does it betray a Want of true Delicacy, to be inſenſible of Nature's Charms? My *Aſpaſio* thinks, it argues as wrong a Taſte in practical Divinity, not to acquieſce in the imputed Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.——To this Doctrine I have always been extremely averſe. I ſet myſelf to oppoſe it with Objections, drawn from the *Reaſon* of Things, and from various Paſſages of *Scripture*. To all which my Friend replied. And though I was ſcarcely convinced, yet I was ſilenced by his Anſwers.

I pleaded for the Sufficiency of our *ſincere* Obedience. Eſpecially, when accompanied with *Repentance*, and recommended by the *Merits* of *CHRIST*.—— Neither was this Attempt ſucceſsful. His Arguments, ſomewhat like the flaming Sword, planted at the Entrance of Paradiſe, *turned every Way* *; and precluded all Acceſs to Life, on the Foot of our own Duty.

At length, *Aſpaſio* quitted the defenſive, and attacked me in his Turn. He explained the Precepts, and inforced the Threatnings, of the divine Law. So exact

——————*Lucis habitamus opacis,*
Riparumque Toros, & Prata recentia Rivis
Incolimus. * Gen. iii. 24.

exact its Tenour! That it demands a perfect and perſevering Conformity to every Injunction.——So *extenſive* its Authority! That it reaches the inmoſt Thoughts; and requires Obedience, not barely in the Actions of the Life, but the very Intentions of the Heart.—So *inexorable* its Severity! That it condemns every the ſmalleſt Offence, and curſes every the leaſt Offender.

This Remonſtrance had ſome of the Terror, and almoſt all the Effect, of a maſked Battery. It was quite unexpected, and alarmed me conſiderably.—To puſh his Advantage, He inlarged upon the *infinite Purity* of GOD. A GOD glorious in Holineſs: *Who cannot look upon Evil*, with any Connivance, or without the utmoſt Abhorrence. Before whom the very Heavens are unclean, and who will in no wiſe clear the Guilty.

To complete his Victory, He played off the Doctrine of original *Guilt*, and original *Depravity*—That beſides the Imputation of *Adam*'s Apoſtacy: beſides the Commiſſion of numberleſs Iniquities; We were born in Sin.—Are, by Nature, Enmity againſt GOD.——In all our Faculties corrupt.——In every Imagination evil.—And, even when renewed * by Grace, are ſtill, ſtill tainted with ſome baſe *Remains* of the old Leproſy.

After all, He bid me conſider—What Fruits muſt ſpring, from *ſuch a Nature?*——How they muſt appear,

* *Even when renewed.*—For a Diſplay of this important Truth, and a Remedy againſt this ſtubborn Evil, let me refer the Reader to a little Treatiſe publiſhed by Dr. *Owen*, and intitled *The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of indwelling Sin in Believers.*——The Author's Pen is indeed a diſſecting Knife, goes deep into his Subject, and lays open this Plague of the Heart. Like a Work-man that need not be aſhamed, He demonſtrates his Point, from the unerring Word of GOD, and the acknowledged Experience of Chriſtians. Like a compaſſionate as well as able Phyſician, He all along preſcibes the proper Antidote; nay, He ſhews how the Poiſon may be ſo over-ruled by divine Grace, and ſo managed by the watchful Patient, as to become medicinal, ſalutary, and conducive to the moſt beneficial Purpoſes.

pear, when compared with *such a Law?*—What they must deserve, when tried before *such a GOD?*—— These, I must confess, are very weighty and startling Queries. If these Representations are true, the Face of human Affairs carries a most gloomy Aspect. Or rather, a most dreadful Storm is hanging over the Children of Men—*Aspasio* urges me to fly, without any Delay, to the Covert of *CHRIST*'s meritorious Obedience. This, He says, was wrought out, in my Name, and in my Stead: This will be admitted both at the Throne of Grace, and the Bar of Judgment, as my justifying Righteousness.

This He adds, opens a Way on GOD's Part, for the largest Emanations and most honourable Exercise of Mercy. On Man's Part, it founds a Title to Pardon, to Life, and every spiritual Blessing.—This Doctrine, especially in such a Connection, begins to put on a *more recommending* Appearance. My Prejudices are really wearing way. I am almost a Convert.

Aspasio over-heard the Close of these Reflections. Unwilling to interrupt his Friend, in so serious an Inquiry; and desirous to observe the Issue of so interesting a Debate; He had hitherto concealed himself. But thinking this a favourable Minute, He stepped forward, and said,—

Asp. Almost! and why not *altogether* a Convert? What should hinder my dear *Theron*, from submitting to so *rational* a Scheme, with the most intire Acquiescence? What should hinder Him from embracing so *comfortable* a Doctrine, with the utmost Complacency? Why should he not subscribe, both with Hand and Heart, that divine Decree? *Their Righteousness is of me, saith the LORD*.*

Ther. If, by this Doctrine, the Claims of the Law are answered—If the Perfections of GOD are glorified—If the Interests of Morality are secured—I must acknowledge, it will be *more worthy* of Acceptance, than I could once have imagined.

Asp. And if all these Points are not gained; gained too in the most eminent Manner; I solemnly declare,

* Isai. liv. 17.

clare, that I will never plead for imputed Righteouſneſs more.

But the *Claims* of the Law are all anſwered.—— For, there is nothing in its ſacred Injunctions, which *CHRIST* did not perform; and nothing in its awful Threatenings, which *CHRIST* did not ſuſtain. He fulfilled all its Precepts, by an unſpotted Purity of Heart, and the moſt perfect Integrity of Life. He exhauſted its whole Curſe, when he hung upon the Croſs, abandoned by his FATHER, and a bleeding Victim for the Sins of his People.—This Obedience brings higher Honour to the divine Law, than it could have received, from the uninterrupted Duty of *Adam*, and all his Poſterity, in all their Generations

The *Perfections* of GOD, which were diſhonoured by our Rebellion, are glorified —He appears, by this Method of Juſtification, inconceivably rich in ſhewing Mercy; yet ſteady, inflexibly ſteady, in executing Vengeance. The *Sceptre* of Grace, and the *Sword* of Juſtice, have each its due Exerciſe, each its full Scope. The Holineſs of the divine Nature, and the Dignity of the divine Government, are not only maintained, but moſt magnificently diſplayed. Indeed, it is the peculiar Excellence of this wonderful Expedient, that it renders *all* the divine Attributes ſupremely venerable, and ſupremely amiable.

Ther. But are the Intereſts of *Morality* ſecured? This is what I am ſtrongly inclined to doubt. And, to ſay the Truth, this is now my principal Objection to your Scheme.

Aſp. I ſhall never blame my Friend, for being vigilant and jealous over the Intereſts of Morality. If our Doctrine had a malignant Aſpect on true Morality, I would give my Voice againſt it, and uſe all my Endeavours to ſuppreſs it.—But it is formed with every Tendency, to awaken the *utmoſt Dread* of Sin, and affect Us with the *warmeſt Senſe* of our CREATOR's Love. And is not *that* the ſtrongeſt Barrier againſt the Incroachments of Vice? Is not *this* the ſweeteſt Inducement to the Practice of Virtue?

I am

I am glad to find, that a Jealouſy for the Intereſts of Morality, is the chief Obſtacle in the Way of your Aſſent. Becauſe, I am perſuaded, it is much of the ſame Nature with thoſe forbidding and miſtaken Apprehenſions, which our Anceſtors entertained, concerning the *Ocean*. They looked upon it, as an unſurmountable Obſtruction, to univerſal Society. Whereas it is, in Fact, the very *Cement* of Society; the only Means of accompliſhing a general Intercourſe; and the great Highway to all the Nations of the Earth. What is here affirmed, may, on ſome future Occaſion, be proved.——At preſent, let me deſire you to imagine, rather, may the Bleſſed S P I R I T enable You to believe, That your Sins *are expiated*, through the Death of *J E S U S C H R I S T*: That a Righteouſneſs *is given* You, by virtue of which, You may have free and welcome Acceſs to G O D; the Merit of which you may plead, for obtaining all the Bleſſings of Time and Eternity.——— Then let me aſk; Will this *alienate* your Affections from your Almighty B E N E F A C T O R? Will this *irritate* evil Concupiſcence, or ſend You to carnal Gratifications in queſt of Happineſs? Quite the reverſe. When this Faith is wrought in your Heart, nothing will be ſo powerful, to produce holy Love, and willing Obedience; to exalt your Deſires, and enable You to overcome the World.

What ſays the Apoſtle? *I through the Law am dead to the Law* †. Being made to underſtand its Spirituality and Perfection, I have no longer any Hope of Juſtification from my own Conformity to its Precepts. ——Did this prompt Him, did this embolden Him, to neglect or violate his Duty? Hear the ſacred Writer's own Declaration. I am releaſed from the Rigour and Bondage of the Law; I am directed to *C H R I S T* for Righteouſneſs and Salvation; *that I may live unto G O D*. That my whole Life may be devoted to HIS Honour, who has brought me into a State ſo delightful, into a Liberty ſo glorious.

Ther. This Liberty, I am afraid, will be of very little Service to the licentious and gay World.

Aſp.

† Gal. ii. 19.

Asp. I shall be in no Pain even for the *gay World*, if once they cordially receive this Grace, and are vitally influenced by this Doctrine. Which, far from dissolving the least Obligation to Obedience, or weakening any one Principle of Piety, adds to every other Motive, the endearing Engagements of Gratitude, and the winning Persuasives of Love.

Nay; I verily believe, that Multitudes in the gay and licentious World, are held fast in the *fatal* Snare by their Ignorance of this sweet, alluring, consolatory Truth. They find themselves deeply obnoxious to divine Justice, and feel themselves strongly bound with the Chains of Sensuality. They think, it is impossible to clear the enormous Score of their Guilt; impossible to deliver themselves from the confirmed Dominion of Sin. Therefore, like *desperate* Debtors, they stifle every serious Thought; lest a Consciousness of their long Arrears, and a Prospect of the dreadful Reckoning, should *torment them before the Time* *.

But if they were informed, that the infinitely merciful SON of GOD, has undertaken to redeem such undone and helpless Sinners—That He has thoroughly expiated the most horrid Transgressions, and procured even for ungodly Wretches, all the needful Supplies of strengthening Grace—That, instead of being prohibited, they are *invited* to partake, *freely* to partake, of these unspeakable Blessings.—Were they acquainted with these glad Tidings, of the Gospel, surely they would burst their Chains, and spring to Liberty. These *Truths*, if once revealed in their Hearts, would, of all Considerations, be most effectual to *make them free* †.

What shall I say more, to obtain my *Theron*'s Approbation? Shall I point out and plead the most illustrious Precedents?—GOD the FATHER is well pleased with this Righteousness of our REDEEMER. He expresses his Complacency by the most emphatical Words: *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth* ‡. In *CHRIST* and

* Matt. viii. 29.
† John viii. 32. ‡ Isa. xlii. 1.

and his Righteouſneſs, GOD is not only pleaſed, but *delighted:* his *very Soul*, every Perfection of the GODHEAD, with ineffable Satisfaction, reſts and acquieſces in them——I ſaid *ineffable*; for He has declared this, in a Manner ſuperior to all the Energy of Language, by raiſing our crucified SURETY from the Dead; by exalting Him to the Heaven of Heavens; and placing Him at his own Right-hand in Glory.

Our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is well pleaſed. He eſteems it his Honour to Shine forth as the everlaſting Righteouſneſs of his People. It is the brighteſt Jewel of his mediatorial Crown. In this He *ſees of the Travail of his Soul, and is ſatisfied.* Accounting Himſelf fully recompenſed, for all the Labours of his Life, and all the Sorrows of his Death, when Sinners are waſhed from their Guilt in his Blood, and preſented faultleſs by his Obedience.

The HOLY SPIRIT is equally pleaſed with this great Tranſaction, and its noble Effects. It is his peculiar Office, and favourite Employ, to *convince* the World of their SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. Not only that his Nature was ſpotleſly pure, and his Converſation perfectly holy; but that from both reſults a Righteouſneſs, of infinite Dignity, and everlaſting Efficacy: ſufficient, throughout all Ages ſufficient, for the Acceptance and Salvation of the moſt unworthy Creatures.

Since then, this Method of Acceptance and Salvation, is excellent and glorious, in the Eyes of the adorable TRINITY—Since it magnifies the Law, and yields the moſt exalted Honour to its Divine AUTHOR——Since it makes ample Proviſion for the Holineſs of a *corrupt*, and the Happineſs of a *ruined* World——Why ſhould my Friend any longer diſlike it; oppoſe it; or treat it with a cold Indifference? Surely, all theſe grand Recommendations, are enough to over rule any little Objections, which may ariſe from the ſuſpicions of Timidity, or may be ſtarted by the Artifices of Sophiſtry.

Ther.

Ther. I know not how it is, *Aſpaſio*; but I cannot reconcile myſelf to this Doctrine of imputed Righteouſneſs: notwithſtanding all the Pains You have taken, to make me a Convert.

Aſp. The Diſappointment is mine, but the Loſs is yours, *Theron.*---However let me intreat You not to reject my Sentiments abſolutely, nor to condemn them prematurely. Suppoſe it poſſible at leaſt, that they *may* be true; and weigh them in an even Balance.---Learn Wiſdom from your *Aſpaſio*'s Folly. I was once exactly in your Situation; ſaw Things in your Light, and through your Medium.

Converſing, I well remember, with a devout but plain Perſon, our Diſcourſe happened to turn upon that ſolemn Admonition; *If any Man will come after ME, let Him deny Himſelf* *. I was haranguing upon the Import and Extent of the Duty Shewing, that merely to forbear the infamous Action, is little, We muſt deny Admittance, deny Entertainment at leaſt, to the evil *Imagination*; and quench even the inkindling Spark of irregular Deſire. When I had ſhot a random Bolt, my honeſt Friend replied; "There is "another Inſtance of Self denial, to which this In-"junction extends, and which is of very Great Mo-"ment in the Chriſtian Religion, I mean, the In-"ſtance of renouncing our own Strength, and our "own Righteouſneſs; not leaning on *that*, for Holi-"neſs; nor relying on *this*, for Juſtification"——I thought the old Man, I muſt confeſs, little better than a ſuperſtitious Dotard; and wondered at (what I then fanſied) the motley Mixture of Piety and Oddity in his Notions. But now I diſcern Senſe, Solidity, and Truth in his Obſervation †. Now I perceive, that We ourſelves are often the Dreamers, when We imagine Others to be faſt aſleep.

* Matt. xvi. 24.

† *Milton* thought the ſame, otherwiſe he would never have put theſe Words into the Mouth of a *divine* Speaker;

——— *Thy Merit,*
Imputed ſhall abſolve them, who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous, Deeds:
And live in Thee tranſplanted, and from Thee
Receive new Life. Book III. 290.

Ther. I ſhall not forget your Caution, and will endeavour to avoid the Rock, on which my *Aſpaſio* ſtruck; but happily, it ſeems, eſcaped Shipwreck.—You may likewiſe aſſure Yourſelf, that, upon a Subject of exceeding great and eternal Conſequence, I ſhall not fail to uſe the moſt attentive and impartial Conſideration. An *indolent* Supineneſs, or a *bigotted* Obſtinacy, in this great Criſis of Affairs, would be of all Errors the moſt inexcuſable, and muſt prove of all Miſcarriages the moſt fatal.

Aſp. But ſtill *You cannot reconcile Yourſelf*——And no Wonder. For this way of Salvation runs directly counter to the Stream of corrupt Nature. It puzzles our Reaſon, and offends our Pride. What? ſhall We, not work, but *believe unto Righteouſneſs* *? Shall We receive all *freely*, and reckon ourſelves no better than *unprofitable* Servants! This a is Method, to which We ſhould never ſubmit; this is a Propoſal, which We ſhould always ſpurn; were not our Sentiments rectified, and our Hearts new moulded, by ſovereign Grace.

Let me remind You of a little Incident, which You muſt have read in the *Grecian* Hiſtory. A certain Stranger came, one Day, to dine with ſome *Lacedæmonians*. They, you know, always ſat down at a public Table, and were content with the plaineſt Food. The Gentleman, accuſtomed to higher Eating, could not forbear expreſſing his Diſguſt, at the *homely* Proviſion——Sir, ſaid the Cook, You don't make uſe of the *Sauce*—What do You mean? replied Gueſt.——You don't uſe hard Exerciſe? nor habituate Yourſelf to long Abſtinence; nor bring a ſharpened Appetite to the Meal.——And You, my dear Friend, I am apprehenſive, have not the Sauce; have not the proper Preparative for this ſalutary Doctrine; which is indeed the Bread of Life, and the very Marrow of the Goſpel.

Ther. What Preparative?

Aſp. A Senſe of your great Depravity, your extreme Guilt, and your utterly undone Condition.—While *deſtitute*

* Rom. x. 10.

deſtitute of theſe Convictions, our Souls will be like *the full Stomach*, that *lothes* even *the Honey comb* —— So long as theſe Convictions are *ſlight*, and *hover* only in the Imagination; We ſhall be like *Gallio**, liſtleſs, indifferent, and *caring for none of theſe Things*.—— But when they are *deep*, and *penetrate* the Heart; then the Righteouſneſs, of a R E D E E M E R will be ſweet, taſteful, and inviting. As Myrrh and Frankincenſe to the Smell; as Milk and Honey to the Palate; as Gold and Treaſures to the ruined Bankrupt.

Ther. What Method would You adviſe me to uſe, in order to get theſe Convictions impreſſed on my Heart?

* *Acts* xviii. 17. A late Commentator, of diſtinguiſhed Eminence, has attempted to vindicate *Gallio*'s Conduct; and would repreſent it, as an amiable Inſtance of *Prudence* and *Moderation*.

According to my Apprehenſion, this *Roman* Governor acted a Part, both irreligious and unjuſt.—*Irreligious*, becauſe he refuſed to hear the Apoſtle's Defence; Which was the moſt likely Means of his Converſion and Salvation. As one great End, why Providence permitted the Preachers of the Goſpel to be *brought before Rulers and Kings*, was, that ſuch an incident might ſerve εις μαρτυριον αυτοις, Matt. x. 18. *for a Teſtimony* (not *againſt*, but) *to them*. That even the Potentates of the Earth, prejudiced and ſupercilious as they were, might hereby have an Opportunity, of hearing the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, and ſeeing its Efficacy on the Spirits of Men.—*Unjuſt*, becauſe he permitted *Soſthenes*, then an innocent Perſon, afterwards a Diſciple of *CHRIST*, (1 Cor. i. 1.) to be ſo illegally treated, and outrageouſly abuſed, without interpoſing for his Reſcue. Here was evidently a Breach of the Peace; a Violation of the Laws. Of *this* therefore the civil Magiſtrate ought to have taken Cognizance: however He might fancy Himſelf diſcharged from the Obligation, of attending to the Goſpel, or protecting its Preachers: however He might imagine Himſelf authorized, to treat divine Truths with Contempt; and call *the Striving for the Faith*, a Wrangling about *Words and Names*.

Beſides; if the HOLY SPIRIT intended to fix a Mark of *Approbation*, rather than a Brand of *Infamy*, upon the *Proconſul*'s Behaviour; I cannot but think, it would have been expreſſed in a manner, different from—ηδεν τουτων τω Γαλλιωνι εμελεν. Which, if it be the Language of Applauſe, requires ſome more than ordinary Skill in Criticiſm, to underſtand it aright. But, if it be the Voice of Cenſure, is obvious and intelligible to every Reader.

Aſp. Endeavour to underſtand GOD's holy Law. Conſider how pure, how extenſive, how ſublimely perfect it is. Then, judge of your ſpiritual State, not from the *flattering* Suggeſtions of Self-love, nor from the *defective* Examples of your Fellow-creatures, but, by this *unerring* Standard of the Sanctuary.—Above all, beſeech the GOD and FATHER of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, to ſend his inlightening SPIRIT into your Soul. For indeed, without the inlightening Influences of the SPIRIT, We may have the divine Law in our Hand; We may comprehend its grammatical Meaning; yet be like blind *Bartimeus* under the meridian Sun. It is the bleſſed SPIRIT alone who can rend the Veil of Ignorance from our Minds; and ſhew Us, either "the wonder-"ful Things of GOD's Law," or the glorious Myſteries of his Goſpel. In this Senſe, our polite Poet * ſpeaks a Truth, as ſingularly important, as it is elegantly expreſſed:

He from thick Films ſhall purge the viſual Ray,
And on the ſightleſs Eye-balls pour the Day.

Will You give me leave to propoſe another Expedient? Which, I believe, may be conſiderably ſerviceable in this particular Caſe. Which, I am aſſured, will be greatly advantageous in many other Reſpects.

Ther. Backward as I am to adopt your Doctrine, I am no Enemy to my own Intereſt. Therefore, ſhall not only give You leave to propoſe, but give You Thanks for communicating, ſo valuable an Advice.

Aſp. It is, in reality, none of mine. It was long ago recommended by your old Acquaintance *Horace* †. It conſiſts in *Keeping a Diary.*

Compile a ſecret Hiſtory of your Heart and Conduct—Take notice of the Manner, in which your *Time*

* Mr. *Pope*, in his charming Poem, ſtyled *The Meſſiah.*

† *Ille velut fidis Arcana Sodalibus olim*
Credebat Libris: neque ſi male ceſſerat uſquam
Decurrens alio, neque ſi bene: quo fit, ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti deſcripta Tabella
Vita Senis. HORAT. Sat.

Time is ſpent; and of the Strain, which runs through your *Diſcourſe*. How often the former is loſt in Trifles, how often the latter evaporates in Vanity——Attend to the *Principle* from which your Actions flow; whether from the ſteady habitual Love of GOD, or from ſome rambling Impulſe and a cuſtomary Propenſity to pleaſe Yourſelf?————Minute down your Sins of *Omiſſion*. How frequently You neglect to glorify your CREATOR; to edify your Fellow-creatures; and to improve Yourſelf in Knowledge and Holineſs —— Obſerve the Frame of your Spirit in *religious* Duties. With what Reluctance they are undertaken, and with what Indevotion performed; with how many Wanderings of Thought, and how much Dulneſs of Deſire.—How often, in the common Affairs of Life, You feel the inordinate Sallies of Paſſion, the Workings of evil Concupiſcence, or the Intruſion of fooliſh Imaginations.

Regiſter thoſe *ſecret* Faults, to which None but your own Conſcience is privy, and which None but the all ſeeing Eye diſcerns.---Often review theſe intereſting Memoirs, Frequently contemplate Yourſelf in this faithful Mirror.---An Artiſt, ſometime ago, took a *Survey* of your Eſtate. Drew the Form, and meaſured the Dimenſions, of each Incloſure. Pictured out every Hedge, and ſcarce omitted a ſingle Tree, which grew upon the Premiſſes.---Act thus with your Will, your Underſtanding, your Affections. Theſe are your noble *internal Demeſne*. Of which None but Yourſelf can be a competent Surveyor.

Ther. It is unreaſonable and prepoſterous, I muſt acknowledge, to be minutely exact in meaner Matters, and uſe no Accuracy of Inſpection in the moſt momentous Affairs. To have a correct Draught of our Lands, which are a *tranſient* Inheritance; and no Map of that *everlaſting* Poſſeſſion, the Soul.

Aſp. Gratify me then, my dear *Theron*, in this Particular. As I purpoſe to ſet out very early in the Morning, I ſhall inſiſt upon it; that you do not riſe before your uſual Time in order to compliment my Departure. But I now make it my *laſt* Wiſh, and my

parting Requeſt, that You will, for ſome Months at leaſt, keep a Diary.

You have wondered at my Opinion, concerning the Corruption of our Nature, and the Inſufficiency of our Righteouſneſs. This may ſeem ſtrange, this may appear ſhocking, to a Mind *unacquainted* with itſelf. But, when You have ſearched your Heart, by this Probe; when You have felt the Pulſe of Your Soul, by Self-examination: then, You will be better able to judge of my Sentiments, and enter into the Reaſons of my Faith.

By this means, We ſhall alſo diſcover the Sins, that moſt eaſily beſet Us; which moſt frequently elude our Vigilance, and baffle our Reſolution. We ſhall learn, *how* to poſt our Guard: *when* to exerciſe the ſtricteſt Watch; and where to direct the Artillery of Prayer. In a Word; We ſhall learn, better than from ten thouſand Volumes, to KNOW OURSELVES. A Knowledge, which was ſuppoſed, by the antient Philoſophers, to deſcend from Heaven*; and which, I believe, our *Chriſtian* Divines will allow, has a happy Tendency to lead People thither. Becauſe, of all other Preparatives, it beſt diſpoſes them for that bleſſed REDEEMER, who is the Way, the only Way, to thoſe bliſsful Manſions.

Now I have mentioned a *Way*, let me ſuppoſe You travelling through an unknown Country. You come to a Place, where the Road divides itſelf into two equally inviting Parts. You are at a Loſs, which Track to purſue. Whoſe Direction will you chooſe to follow? That Man's, who has paſſed through *neither* of them? That Man's, who has paſſed through *one* of them only? Or that Man's, who has paſſed and repaſſed them *both*? — To wait for an Anſwer, would be an Affront to your Judgment. Only let me obſerve, that the laſt is your *Aſtaſio*'s Caſe. He has travelled long, and proceeded far, even in *your* Path. All that Circumſpection and Aſſiduity, all that Prayer and Self-

*——*E Cœlo deſcendit, γνωθι σεαυτον.* JUVEN.

Self-denial, all that Faſting and Alms, and every other Means of Grace could do, in order to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of his own, has been done. But to no Purpoſe.---He has alſo trod every Step in the Way, which he recommends to his beloved Friend. He has made the Trial; can ſet his *Probatum eſt*, to whatever He adviſes; and may very truly ſay, with his Divine MASTER, *We ſpeak that We do know* *, and teſtify that We have experienced.

Ther. I am ſorry to obſerve, that the Night is coming on, and our Converſation almoſt at an End. My Regret is increaſed, by the Conſideration of your intended Journey.---Though Buſineſs obliges You to *depart*; it will, I hope, afford You Leiſure to *write*. This will be ſome Compenſation for the Want of your Company.

Yonder Sun is ſinking below the Horizon, and juſt taking his leave of our Earth. To retard the departing Radiance, at leaſt to alleviate the approaching Loſs, thoſe weſtern Clouds catch the Rays; and reflect them to our View, in a moſt amuſing Diverſity of Colours. By this means, We enjoy the great Luminary in *his Beams*, even when *his Orb* is withdrawn from our Sight.---An epiſtolary Correſpondence has ſomething of the ſame Nature. Letters may be called, the Talk of abſent Friends. By this Expedient, they communicate their Thoughts, even though Countries, Kingdoms, or Seas intercept their Speech. You muſt, therefore, promiſe me this Satisfaction; and let me converſe with my *Aſpaſio* by the *Pen*, when I can no longer have an Intercourſe with Him in *Perſon*.

Aſp. You have anticipated me, *Theron*. Otherwiſe, what is now my, Promiſe, would have been my Requeſt.

I cannot but take notice of another Particularity in that magnificent Aſſemblage of Clouds. How they varied their Appearance, as the Lamp of Day changed its Situation.---A little while ago, thoſe Curtains of the Sky, were ſtreaked with Orange, or tinged with Amber. Preſently, they borrowed the Bluſh of the Roſe,

* John iii. 11.

or the ſoftened Red of the Pink. Ere long, they glow with Vermilion, or deepen into Crimſon. Soon ſucceeds the Purple-tinctured Robe of Majeſty; and as ſoon (thus tranſient is all ſublunary Grandeur!) gives place to the *ſable Veil* of Evening, or the *gloomy Pall* of Night.—— Such, I truſt will be the Iſſue of my *Theron*'s preſent Apprehenſions. All his ſplendid Ideas of human Excellency and Self-righteouſneſs, will become faint; will loſe their imaginary Luſtre; till, at length, they fade away, and darken into abſolute *Self-abaſement*.—Then, the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS will be amiable, will be deſirable, as the Beauties of the Dawn, breaking upon the Shades of Night.

A

SERIES

OF

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I AM now at the Seat of my worthy Friend *Camillus*; where Buſineſs and Inclination will fix me for ſome Weeks. This Evening we had a moſt pleaſing Ramble. I have met with nothing ſo agreeable ſince I left your Houſe, and loſt your Company.

The Time was juſt arrived, and the Scene was fully opened, which furniſhed our great Poet with his fine Deſcription;

Now was the Sun in weſtern Cadence low,
From Noon; and gentle Airs, due at their Hour,

To fan the Earth now wak'd, and uſher in
The Evening cool.

At this Juncture, *Camillus* invited me to take the Air.—We walked, ſeveral Times, along a cloſe ſhady Alley, arched with the Foliage of *Filberts*. Here, hid from every Eye, and the whole World withdrawn from our View, We ſeemed like *Monks* ſtroling in their Cloyſters—Turning ſhort at the End, We enter a parallel Range of majeſtic and uniformly ſpreading *Wallnut Trees*. This Tranſition, was ſomewhat like advancing, through a low Porch, into the Iſles of a magnificent *Cathedral*. The broad Leaf, and large Trunk of thoſe lordly Trees—their very diffuſive Spread, added to their prodigious Height—give them an Air of uncommon Dignity. It ſwells the Imagination with vaſt Ideas, and entertains us with a romantic Kind of Delight, to expatiate amidſt ſuch huge Columns, and under ſuch ſuperb Elevations, of living Architecture.

Quitting our Cathedral, We turn once again, and paſs into a grand Colonade of *Oaks:* ſo regular in their Situation, ſo ſimilar in their Size, and ſo remarkably correſpondent in every Circumſtance, that they looked like the *Twins* of Nature; not only belonging to the ſame Family, but produced at the ſame Birth.—Through theſe lay a Walk, ſtraight, ſpacious, and gracefully long. Far exceeding the laſt in the Extent of its Area, though much inferior in the Statelineſs of its Cieling. It put me in mind of that divine Benignity, which has allowed Us *ſix* Days, for the Proſecution of our own comparatively low Affairs; and ſet apart but *one*, for the more immediate Attendance on the ſublime Exerciſes of Devotion.

This Walk was covered with the neateſt *Gravel*; and not a Weed to be ſeen, nor one Spire of Graſs, through the whole extended Surface. It ſtole into a continual Aſcent; yet ſo very gradually, that the Riſe was ſcarce diſcernable either by the ſearching Eye, the toiling Feet, or the panting Breath.—At the Extremity,

mity, a handſome *Summerhouſe* ſhewed a Flight of Steps, and half a *Venetian* Door. The reſt of the Building was hid by the cluſtering Branches.

As ſoon as We enter the Apartment, *Camillus* throws open the Left-hand Saſh; and, with it a moſt inlarged and amuſive *Proſpect*.—The Structure appeared ſituate on the Brow of a conſiderable Eminence. Whoſe Sides were partly confuſed and wild with broken Rocks, partly ſhagged and perplexed with thorny Shrubs. The Spectator is agreeably ſurprized, to find Himſelf accommodated with ſo *elegant* a Manſion, on the Summit of ſo *rude* and *ruinous* a Spot.—But, how greatly is his Surpriſe and his Satisfaction augmented, when he caſts his Eye forward; and beholds the beautiful *Meads*, which, from the Foot of this ragged Hill, ſtretch themſelves into a Space almoſt unmeaſurable!

Through the midſt of this extenſive Vale, which was decked with the fineſt Verdure, and repleniſhed with the richeſt Herbage, a *River* rolled its copious Flood. Rolled in a thouſand ſerpentine *Meanders*, as though it had loſt its Way in the flowery Labyrinth, or made repeated Efforts of flowing back to its Source. ——Till, at laſt, having wandered more than twice the Length of the Meadows; having held a Mirror to the aſpiring Poplars, and bending Willows; having paid a welcome Salute to ſeveral ornamented *Villas*, and paſſed through the Arches of two or three curiouſly pendent Bridges; it ſeemed to meet the Sky, and mingle with the Horizon.

Oppoſite to the Front Window, a *Caſcade* fell from the adjacent Stream. It flaſhed and foamed along the broad Slope, indented with ſmall Pits, and jagged with protuberant Stones. The Current, vexed and embarraſſed, ſeemed to *rave* at the intervening Obſtacles; and forcing its rapid, indignant, ſonorous Way, ſtruck the Ear with a Peal of liquid Thunder. Theſe fretful Waters—let our *angry* Paſſions obſerve the Admonition, and follow the Example——ſoon were pacified; ſoon forgot to chide. Collected into a little Rivulet, they ran off in calm and ſilent Laſe, till they loſt themſelves

themſelves amongſt Beds of Oſier, and Plantations of Alder.

The River, widening as it flowed, was parted here and there by ſeveral little Iſlands. Some tufted with *Reeds*, and the Reſort of Swans. Some, adorned with ſtately *Porticos*, and ſplendid *Alcoves*, the graceful Retreats of rural Pleaſure. Some, furniſhed with green imbowering Walks, fitted for ſtudious Retirement and ſedate Contemplation.—On either Side of the charming Valley, Towns and Villages lay thick and looked gay; adding Ornament and Variety to the Scene, and receiving innumerable Advantages from the paſſing Waves.

The Whole recalled to an attentive Obſerver's Mind, that amiable and auguſt Spectacle, which the *Syrian* * Soothſayer could not behold, without a Rapture of Delight; *From the Top of the Rocks I ſee* the Tribes of JEHOVAH, *and from the Hills I behold* the Habitations of his choſen People. *How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! And thy Tabernacles, O Iſrael! As the Vallies, are they ſpread forth; as Gardens, by the River's Side: as Trees of exquiſite Fragrance* †, *which the LORD hath planted: as Cedars* of ſtateſieſt Growth, *flouriſhing beſide the Waters.*

We had but juſt looked about Us, when a Meſſenger came for *Camillus*. As He was called to ſettle ſome private Affairs, I choſe to ſtay in this inviting Retreat; and determined to make myſelf amends for the Loſs of *Camillus*'s Company, by beginning a Correſpondence with my *Theron*——We have Pen, Ink, and Paper, in all our rural Retirements; that, if any Thing is ſtarted in Diſcourſe, or occurs in Meditation, worthy

* Numb. xxiii. 7.

† *Numb.* xxiv. 5, 6. It is well known that the Word אֲהָלִים is uſed in the ſacred Writings, to denote either a *delightful Perfume*, Prov. vii. 17. or that *aromatic Plant*, which produces it, *Cant.* iv. 14—For which Reaſon, I think it very juſtifiable, to render the Expreſſion, *Trees of exquiſite Fragrance*; and am perſuaded, it will be far more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than *Trees of Lign-Aloes*.

worthy to be remembered, it may immediately be committed to Writing.

I could not but obſerve to my Friend, that, fine as the Proſpect appeared, there was one Decoration wanting; if ſome *grand Deformity* may be called a Decoration. The Ridges of a bleak and barren Mountain, or the Skirts of a Sun-burnt tawny Heath, would give *additional Livelineſs*, to the ornamented Parts of the Landſcape, and make their Beauties ſtrike with double Vigour.—This alſo, by ſhewing Us, what wretched Abodes and inhoſpitable Quarters might have fallen to our Share, would awaken in our Hearts a more fervent Gratitude to the Supreme DISPOSER of Things; who has caſt *our* "Lot in a fairer Ground, and given us a more goodly Heritage."

So, a proper Knowledge of the divine *Law*——of its ſublime Perfections, and rigorous Sanction—joined with a Conviction of our own extreme Deficiency, and manifold Tranſgreſſions.—All this would endear the bleſſed *JESUS* to our Affections, and powerfully recommend his Righteouſneſs to our Deſires.——The Remainder of this Epiſtle, therefore, ſhall turn upon ſome Inſtances of Duty injoined in that ſacred Syſtem. *By which* it may be highly uſeful to examine our Conduct, and fill our Hearts: *in which*, I believe, we have all fallen ſhort, and are all become guilty: *from which*, We may learn the Imperfection of our beſt Services, and ſee the inexpreſſible Need of a better Righteouſneſs than our own!

The Knowledge of GOD is the Foundation of all vital Religion, and indeed is the Conſummation of human Happineſs. It is not only Matter of preſent Duty, but the very Eſſence of our future Bliſs; *This is Life eternal, to know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou haſt ſent**.—— Yet important and obligatory as it is, are We not very defective in this divine Science? Have We duly acquainted Ourſelves with the marvelous Excellencies of the LORD JEHOVAH? His uncontroulable Power, and all-comprehending Wiſdom;

* John xvii. 3.

dom; his unbounded Goodneſs, and unwearied Patience; his immaculate Holineſs, and inflexible Juſtice: his never failing Faithfulneſs, and inviolable Veracity?—Have We, according to the Direction of our *inſpired* Tutor, purſued this ſacred Study on our Knees*; and ſought this moſt noble of all intellectual Endowments, not merely from Books, but principally at the Throne of Grace. Have we ſought it, like that antient *Jewiſh* Student, with an early Application, and with inceſſant Aſſiduity; even "from "the Flower, till the Grape was ripe †?"

Is that ſcanty Ray of Knowledge, which perhaps has forced itſelf through our original Darkneſs, *operative* on our Affections? Have We loved the LORD our GOD with all our Heart? This is the firſt and great Commandment ‡—Have We conſtantly entertained the moſt magnificent and honourable Thoughts of his ſublime Perfections? Is our Eſteem for this immenſely great and moſt bleſſed BEING, high, ſuperlative, matchleſs? Somewhat like *that*, expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt; *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is None upon Earth, that I deſire in compariſon of Thee* §.—Have we been affectionately concerned for his *Glory*, and zealous to advance his holy Religion? Troubled, very ſenſibly troubled, when our MAKER's Honour has been trampled in the Duſt, by licentious Tongues, or flagitious Deeds?

Have We made it our ruling Care, to approve the Whole of our Life, and the moſt ſecret Tranſactions of our Breaſt, to his all-ſeeing Eye? Reſolved, deliberately reſolved, to ſacrifice, not only our darling Luſts, but even our moſt valuable Intereſts, whenever they ſtand in competition with the good Pleaſure of his Will?——In a Word; as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, with ſuch *vehement* and *inextinguiſhable* Ardour, have We thirſted after——a brighter Manifeſtation of his divine Attributes—ſome ſweeter Aſſurances of his ſpecial Love——and an ever-increaſing Conformity to his holy Image?

Such

* Jam. i. 5. † Eccluſ. li. 15. ‡ Matt. xxii. 38.
§ Pſal. lxxiii. 25.

Such was the Temper of thoſe excellent Men, who are characterized in the Scriptures of Truth, as Children of the HIGHEST, and Patterns for our Imitation. This is their Language, *The Deſire of our Soul is unto thy Name, and to the Remembrance of Thee. With my Soul have I deſired Thee in the Night; yea, with my Spirit within me will I ſeek Thee early* *.——Neither is ſuch Warmth of Love, and Fervour of Deſire, any needleſs or extravagant Pitch of Devotion; But a *reaſonable* Service, indiſpenſibly due, from all intelligent Creatures, to the great AUTHOR of their Being ——in whom all poſſible Perfections, with the utmoſt Exaltation and Dignity, reſide—from whom all Manner of Bleſſings, in the moſt copious and never-failing Communications, flow.

When We receive, from an abſent *Friend*, rich and repeated Preſents; Caſks of generous Wine, or Jarrs of delicious Fruits; We feel Ourſelves inkindled into a grateful Affection. We honour, We love the Perſon, who allows Us ſuch a diſtinguiſhed Place in his Heart; and expreſſes his cordial Regard, by ſuch a Series of active and tender Benevolence.—The Bleſſed GOD is a Friend to Us All, infinitely powerful, and equally munificent. We are the conſtant Objects of his *more than* friendly, of his parental Cares. Every paſſing Moment is a Meſſenger of his Patience, and charged with ſome Token of his Bounty. For *our* Sake, He has diffuſed Bleſſings over all the Face of the Earth; and commanded every Element to concur in miniſtering to our Accommodation. He has not only adapted his Benefits to our ſeveral Wants; but

* *Iſai.* xxvi. 8, 9. We can hardly tell, which to admire moſt, the *Beauty* of the Deſcription, or the *Piety* of the Perſons. *I have deſired*; and not with inactive Wiſhes, but ſuch as prompt to vigorous Endeavours, *I will ſeek Thee.* And *early*, with the moſt vigilant Application and unwearied Aſſiduity.—The Emphaſis is very much increaſed, by the Addition of thoſe lively Words, *with my Soul, yea with my Spirit*; with the whole Bent and Sway of my Affections, and with the ſteady invariable Determination of my Judgment.—Thus *have I* deſired Thee, even *in the Night*; when both the Purſuits and the Thoughts of other People, are ſunk and loſt in profound Repoſe. Thus *will I* ſeek Thee, with a Zeal—*early* as the riſing—*conſtant* as the returning Sun.

but has given them a *Diverſification*, large as the Scope of our Wiſhes; and an *Enrichment*, far beyond all that our Fancy could conceive.—Profuſe Liberality! Yet ſmall and ſcanty, compared with his moſt adorable Benignity in *CHRIST JESUS*.

What? If GOD, willing to manifeſt the ſuper-abundant Riches of his Kindneſs, had made bare the Arm of his Omnipotence; and ſtruck a moſt miraculous Road through the Surges of the Ocean, to afford Us a ſafe Paſſage?——If, to accommodate Us in our Travels, He had brought Waters out of the flinty Rock; and bid the Ravens bring Meat to our Hands, bid the Winds convey Manna to our Doors?—If, to furniſh us with a commodious Settlement, He had dethroned mighty Kings, diſpoſſeſſed populous Nations, and made the Walls of impregnable Cities fall to the Ground?——If, to further the Diſpatch of our Buſineſs, or facilitate the Conqueſt of our Enemies, He had arreſted the Sun in his meridian Career, and laid an Embargo upon the Moon, ſetting out on her nightly Tour?—In ſhort, if to promote our Welfare, He had ſuſpended the Powers, and controuled the Laws of univerſal Nature, had wrought *all* the Miracles, exhibited in the Land of *Egypt*, or recorded in the Volumes of Inſpiration—Should We not think Ourſelves under the moſt inviolable Engagements, to love the LORD our GOD, *Who had done ſo great Things for Us*; to love Him unfeignedly and ardently; to love Him with a ſupreme Affection, far above every other amiable Object?—Yet, We have greater, incomparably greater Obligations to our Almighty BENEFACTOR. For (hear O Heavens! wonder O Earth! and let Eternity dwell upon the ſtupendous Truth!) *GOD ſpared not his SON—his own SON*—his tranſcendently glorious and divinely excellent *SON——but delivered him up* to the deepeſt Humiliation, and to the moſt accurſed Death, *for Us* Men and our Salvation!

O, *Theron*! Have We been impreſſed with *Wonder*, at the Contemplation of this Goodneſs? Have our Hearts

Hearts glowed with *Gratitude*, under a Senſe of theſe Mercies? Surely, No Man need be convicted of any other Crime, at the great Tribunal, than Inſenſibility of ſuch Love, and Ingratitude for ſuch Favours. This without the Acceſſion of horrid Impieties, is enough to leave Him abſolutely inexcuſable. This is enough to prove Him one of the moſt *diſingenous*, and *deteſtable* of Creatures.

Have We exerciſed Ourſelves in frequent *Thankſgiving?* Many are the Exhortations to this honourable Duty. *Praiſe thy GOD, O Sion*: Praiſe Him for his mighty Acts† :——Praiſe Him according to his excellent Greatneſs‡ :* Innumerable are the Incitements to abound in this pleaſant Service. Every Comfort has a Voice, and cries in the Ear of Reaſon; *O! that Men would therefore praiſe the LORD for his Goodneſs.* Every Deliverance inforces the Addreſs, and furniſhes freſh Materials for the heavenly Employ. —The Man after GOD's own Heart declares, as an inviting Example for our Practice; *I will bleſs the LORD at all Times: His Praiſe ſhall continually be in my Mouth§: Yea, as long as I have any Being, I will ſing Praiſes unto my GOD‖.*——Indeed, when We conſider the inexhauſtibly rich Bounty of GOD our CREATOR, and the inconceivably tender Mercy of GOD our REDEEMER, it is both ſtrange and deplorable, that the Love of GOD is not always prevailing in our Hearts, and the Language of Praiſe ever flowing from our Lips.

I will

* Pſal. cxlvii. 12. † Pſal. cl. 2.

‡ Among theſe Exhortations, We may rank that beautiful and devout Addreſs to GOD, יושב תהלות ישראל Pſal xxii. 3. *Thou that inhabiteſt.*——Light inacceſſible, ſhall I ſay? The Regions of Immenſity, or the Ages of Eternity? No; but what is a more exalted Character——*The Praiſes* of *Iſrael.* Finely ſignifying, that Praiſe is a moſt acceptable Sacrifice; to which the divine MAJESTY attends with the greateſt Delight.—— Intimating alſo, that the Exerciſe of Praiſe ſhould not be an occaſional Thing, like a *tranſient Viſit* to a Stranger's Houſe; but a daily and almoſt unintermitted Service, like the *ſtated Reſidence* of a Perſon in his own Habitation.

§ Pſal. xxxiv. 1. ‖ Pſal. cxlvi. 2.

I will not ſuppoſe our Character ſo irreligious, that We have neglected the daily Worſhip of GOD, either in our Cloſet, or in our Family.——But, have we prayed with that profound *reverential Awe*, which is due to the HIGH and LOFTY ONE, *who inhabiteth Eternity?*——Have We made our Supplications with that *fervent Importunity*, which may in ſome meaſure correſpond with the extreme Indigence of our State, and the invaluable Worth of the Bleſſings We crave?—Have our Petitions been attended with that *ſteady Affiance*, which may glorify the Goodneſs, the Power, the Veracity of the LORD? May evidently declare, That He *is rich in Mercy, to All that call upon Him* * that He *is the LORD JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting Strength* †: that He *is the GOD of Truth, and faithful for ever* ‡. We call Him FATHER: but have We truſted in Him, with that unſuſpecting, chearful, filial Confidence, which a Child repoſes on the Fidelity and Indulgence of ſuch an earthly Relative? Have We not entertained, too often entertained, narrow, diſhonourable, beggarly Apprehenſions, concerning the Treaſures of his Liberality, and the Bowels of his Pity? Rating them even lower than our Parent's, our Friend's, or our own.

Have We been careful to carry the Spirit of our Prayers into our *ordinary* Converſation; and waited at the Door, as well as approached to the Throne of Grace?—Amidſt the Intervals of our ſolemn Devotions, have We cultivated an *ejaculatory* Intercourſe with Heaven? How highly would the ambitious Courtier *prize*, and How frequently would He *uſe* a privy Key, which ſhould give Him, at all Hours, free Admittance to his Sovereign. This Key of Admittance, only to an infinitely more exalted POTENTATE, We all poſſeſs in the Practice of mental Aſpirations to GOD.——It is certainly the nobleſt Employ, and will be the richeſt Improvement of our Thoughts, to ſend them in ſuch ſhort Embaſſies to the

* Rom. x. 12. † Iſai. xxvi. 4. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 4.

the KING of Kings; and to derive by such occasional Sallies * of Faith, a renewed Supply from

* We have, in Scripture, very remarkable Instances of the Success, which has attended *ejaculatory Prayer*.—Observe *Nehemiah*: He stands before *Ahasuerus*, apprehensive of the Monarch's Displeasure, yet desirous to solicit Him in Behalf of *Jerusalem*. To be delivered from his Fears, and to obtain his Desires, what Method does He use? The mean and servile Arts of Flattery? No: but the manly and devout Expedient of Prayer. *I prayed*, says the Patriot, *to the GOD of Heaven*—We cannot suppose, that He fell on His Knees, or spoke with his Lips, while He continued in the royal Presence. But he darted up his Soul in *silent* Supplication. Which Supplication "pierced the Clouds," reached the eternal Throne; and returned not again till a Blessing was sent. Such as totally averted the Wrath, He dreaded; and procured Favour and Assistance, much larger than he expected. *Nehem.* ii. 4.

When *David* heard, that *Ahitophel*, the ablest Politician in his Kingdom, was revolted to *Absalom*; sensible what a Loss his Affairs had sustained, and what an Advantage the rebellious Party had acquired, He betook himself to his GOD. He staid not for an Opportunity of Retirement, but instantly and upon the Spot cried; *O LORD, I pray Thee turn the Counsel of Ahitophel into Foolishness!*——A *short* Address, but very *efficacious*. HE, who disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, sent a Spirit of Infatuation among the Rebels; and inclined them to reject the Advice of that judicious Statesman. Which false Step brought upon their horrid Enterprize the Ruin it deserved; and chagrined the wretched Traitor, even to Rage, Frenzy, and Suicide. 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. xvii. 23.

Amyntor, at a memorable Period of his Life, was under great Distress of Conscience, and harassed by violent Temptations. He made his Case known to an experienced Friend; who said, *Amyntor, You do not pray.*——Surprised at this, He replied; "I "pray, if such a Thing be possible too much. I can hardly "tell, how many Times in the Day, I bow my Knee before "GOD; almost to the Omission of my other Duties, and the "Neglect of my necessary Studies."—"You mistake my Mean"ing, dear *Amyntor*; I do not refer You to the Ceremony of "the *Knee*, but to the Devotion of the *Heart*. Which neglects "not *any* Business, but intermingles Prayer with *all*. Which, "in every Place, looks unto the LORD; and, on every Oc"casion, lifts up an indigent longing Soul for the Supply of his "Grace. This, (added He, and spoke with a peculiar Vehe"mence) *this* is the Prayer, which all the Devils in *Hell* can"not withstand."—This, I would farther observe, is the Prayer, which brings down somewhat of *Heaven* into the Heart; in which I would myself desire to abound; and would earnestly recommend, to all my Acquaintance, and all my Readers.

from the Fountain of all Good. How great a *Loſs* then muſt it be to our ſpiritual Intereſts, and how contemptuous a *Diſregard* of the ever preſent JEHOVAH, to omit intirely, or long to diſcontinue, this moſt beneficial Practice of habitual Adoration?—Can You, my dear *Theron*, acquit Yourſelf on this Article of Inquiry? Has not every Day of your Life been a Day of Negligence in this Reſpect? Been a perpetual Diſobedience to our SAVIOUR's Injunction; *Men ought*, in this Manner, *always to pray, and not to faint* *.

Have We ſanctified the *Sabbath*? Has the LORD's Day, with all its ſolemn and ſacred Offices, been our Delight?—Have We remembered that diſtinguiſhed Portion of our Time, as *Jacob* remembered the delightful Interview at *Peniel*? Have We expected it, as Merchants expect the Arrival of a richly laden Veſſel? Have We improved it, as Huſbandmen improve the ſhining Hours of the Harveſt?——Have We wholly laid aſide every earthly Engagement; *not ſpeaking our own Words* †, nor allowing Ourſelves in any Gratifications, that may interrupt our Communion with the FATHER of Spirits?——Has *one Day in his Courts been preferable to a Thouſand* ‡, ſpent either in the Works of our Calling, or in the Scenes of Recreation?——Have the Memorials of our REDEEMER's dying Merits, and the Seals of his unchangeable Loving-kindneſs, been reliſhed as a Feaſt, and prized as a Portion?

Have We honoured GOD's holy *Word*?—What greater Mark of Diſeſteem, than to deſpiſe a Perſon's Diſcourſe; and not to think his Speech worthy of our Notice? Eſpecially, when He addreſſes Us with very great Seriouſneſs, and with the utmoſt Affection. In our Bible, the GOD of Glory ſpeaks to his Creatures; ſpeaks with the moſt perſuaſive Energy, and with all the Yearnings of parental Tenderneſs. Have We liſtened to our CREATOR, with Reverence and Delight; and rejoiced with Trembling at—*Thus ſaith the LORD?*

Have

* Luke xviii. 1. † Iſai. lviii. 13. ‡ Pſal. lxxxiv. 10.

Have We ſearched the Oracles of Truth, not merely as *Scholars*, but as *Sinners*, not from a Spirit of Curioſity, or with an Air of Formality, but with a Solicitude and Ardour, becoming Perſons, who inquire after the SAVIOUR of their loſt Souls? Have We ſubmitted our inmoſt Thoughts to their impartial Scrutiny; to receive Conviction of Sin from their awful Remonſtrances, and to hear the Sentence of Condemnation at their righteous Bar?—Have We been willing to ſuffer the Reproach of *conſcious Baſeneſs*, while they have ripped up the Diſguiſes of Falſhood; laid open our ſecret Iniquities; and brought all our evil Ways to Remembrance? Thus *Joſiah* acted. *His Heart was tender, and He humbled Himſelf before the LORD; He rent his Cloaths, and wept before the LORD, when He heard the Words of the Book of the Law* *.

Have We hid the glad Tidings of the Goſpel within our Memories, within our Hearts? Have We been diligent to ſuck this *Honeycomb* † of Grace by concomitant Meditation, and ſubſequent Prayer?——Have We valued the precious Promiſes, as Gentlemen of Wealth value the Writings of their private Eſtates; or as infranchiſed Bodies eſteem the Charter of their public Privileges?——Have We, like the princely Patriarch, longed for thoſe Words of *Edification, Exhortation and Comfort*, more than for our neceſſary Food ‡? And, like the royal Prophet, prevented the Night-watches, that We may be occupied in thoſe Statutes § and Ordinances of Heaven?

We have hitherto confined the Examination, to a few Inſtances of the *affirmative* Kind; how dreadfully will the dark Account be ſwelled, if inſtead of Love and Obedience, there be Hatred and Oppoſition—*Hatred* of the Name, Glory, and Worſhip of GOD—*Oppoſition* to his Intereſt, Kingdom, and Service!

GOD is *infinite Perfection*: worthy of all Admiration: exalted above all Praiſe. Yet do not our Thoughts

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27. † Cant. v. 1. ‡ Job xxiii. 12. § Pſal. cxix. 148.

Thoughts more frequently, or more naturally turn upon our own Accompliſhments, than upon the adorable and ſhining Attributes of the ALMIGHTY? This is, in itſelf, the moſt ſhameful *Dotage*; and, in GOD's Sight the moſt abominable *Idolatry*. Yet, let Us obſerves what paſſes within, and We ſhall probably find, that as Damps ariſe in the Mines, or Fogs in the fenny Grounds, ſo naturally, and ſo copiouſly do theſe over-weening Reflections ariſe in our depraved Minds.

GOD is an *everlaſting King*. Have We not too often reſiſted his Authority? Have We not, as far as in Us lay, depoſed the omnipotent SOVEREIGN, and exalted *Self* into the Throne? Made Self-will our Law, and Self-pleaſing our End? Thus adding Sacrilege to Rebellion?

GOD is tranſcendently *gracious* and *amiable*. Have We not turned our Backs upon Him by forgetting his Mercies! Nay, have we not ſpurned Him from our Affections, by being *Lovers of Pleaſure, more than Lovers of GOD* *?——Awake, Conſcience: bear thy impartial Teſtimony: and I am perſuaded, the *Phariſee* in our Breaſts, like the Man unfurniſhed with the Wedding-garment, muſt be ſtruck dumb; muſt be covered with Confuſion.

Is our Heart warm with *brotherly Love?*——Good-manners will put Expreſſions of Civility into our Mouths; but has a Power from on High implanted the royal Law of Charity in our Breaſts? The Character of a Gentleman requires a Deportment acceſſible, obliging, and courteous: has the Spirit of *Chriſtianity* taught Us to love, *not in Word*, or plauſible Appearance only, *but in Deed and in Truth* †?——Do We love our Neighbours, not merely on account of ſome Relation they bear Us, or ſome Services they have done Us? But, becauſe they are Creatures of the bleſſed GOD; are the Objects of his providential Care; and capable at leaſt of being conformed to his Image? Do We love them, becauſe We hope, that the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* has bought them with his Blood; is

* 2 Tim. iii. 4. † 1 John iii. 18.

is willing to make them Partakers of his SPIRIT, and Members of his Myſtical Body?

Are We ſincerely concerned for their preſent Welfare, and their eternal Happineſs? Do We embrace all Opportunities of promoting, both the one, and the other? Embrace them with the *ſame* Alacrity, and improve them with the ſame Zeal, which actuate Us in ſeeking *our own* Felicity?——If they exceed Us in all that is amiable, and all that is proſperous, do We contemplate their ſuperior Excellence with a real Complacency, and their more abundant Succeſs with a real Satisfaction.

Do We diſlike to hear, and abhor to ſpread, defamatory Tales; even when our Adverſaries are the Men, whom they tend to blacken?——When rudely affronted, or cauſeleſly abuſed, do We pity the Offenders, for the *Wrong* done to their own Souls; rather than kindle into Reſentment, at the *Indignity* offered to Ourſelves?—When greatly injured, are We ſlow to Anger, and not eaſily provoked? Are We much more willing to be reconciled, than to foment Diſpleaſure, and proſecute Revenge? In a Word; do We *love our Enemies*; *bleſs them that curſe Us*; *do Good to them, that hate Us: and pray for them, which deſpitefully uſe Us, and perſecute Us* *?——Without this loving and lovely Diſpoſition, *We abide*, ſays the Apoſtle, *in Death* †; are deſtitute of ſpiritual, and have no Title to eternal Life.

Let me add——Are all our Graces, and all our Works, *clothed with Humility?* This ſhould be the Dreſs, in which they ſeverally appear; as well as the Bond of Connection, which unites them all ‡?—Do We maintain a very low Opinion of our own Accompliſhments,

* *Matt.* v. 44. *What Manner of Love is this?* How diſintereſted! how extenſive! how triumphant! Muſt not all the boaſted *Benevolence* of the Philoſopher and Moraliſt, ſtrike Sail to this evangelical Charity? Muſt not both Moraliſt and Philoſopher acknowledge the Neceſſity of a *divine* Operation, thus to inlarge, exalt, and refine their ſocial Affections?

† 1 John iii. 14.

‡ 1 *Pet.* v. 5. The unuſual Word ἐγκομβώσασθε is ſuppoſed to have *both* theſe Significations.

compliſhments, and *in Honour prefer Others to Ourſelves* *? Habitually ſenſible that We are leſs than the leaſt of the divine Mercies, and the very chiefeſt of Sinners?

I might eaſily have branched out the preceding Subjects, into a much greater Variety of interrogatory Articles. But I intend only to preſent You with a Specimen. Your own Meditations will inlarge the Sketch, and ſupply what is defective. Only let me beg of You, my dear Friend, to try your State by this Touchſtone; to prove your Conduct by this Standard. And may the FATHER of Lights give You an Underſtanding, to diſcern the exact Purity and ſublime Perfection of his holy Law!

Have You lived in the *uninterrupted* Obſervance of all theſe Duties; avoiding whatever is forbidden, and obeying whatever is commanded? Your outward Behaviour, I know, has been free from notorious Violations; but has your inward Temper been preſerved, from all ungodly Motions, and from every irregular Deſire? Is there no Enmity in your Heart to any of the Precepts; nor any Backwardneſs, nor any Failure in performing each and every Injunction?

When You put theſe Queſtions to Yourſelf, remember, That if You fail in *one* Point, or in *any* Degree, You are guilty of all †. If your Conformity be not *perſevering* as well as *perfect*, You incur the Penalty, and are abandoned to the Curſe. You ſtand charged before the JUDGE of the World, with all the Guilt of all your Sins, both original and actual: and there is not one Circumſtance, nor one Aggravation, of any of your Iniquities, overlooked or forgotten—UNLESS, renouncing all your *perſonal* Performances, You place your whole Affiance on a SAVIOUR's Atonement, and a SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs.——I think, You will not dare to put the Iſſue of your everlaſting State upon the former Footing. Which is not only hazardous, but muſt be inevitably ruinous. You will infinitely rather chooſe, to acknowledge Yourſelf a poor

* Rom. xii. 10. † Jam. ii. 10. Gal. iii. 10.

poor Insolvent; and plead the unsearchable Riches of your REDEEMER's Obedience.

To those who believe the Law, though *strict*, is not *terrible*. Because, be its Precepts of Holiness ever so extensive, they have been most completely fulfilled by their glorious SURETY. Be its penal Sanction ever so rigorous, they have been satisfied to the utmost, by their great MEDIATOR.—Believers, therefore, may make their Boast of their adorable SPONSOR. They may *sit under his Shadow with great Delight* *. While the Thunderings of Mount *Sinai*, and all the Terrors of the legal Dispensation, tend only to increase and quicken the refreshing Sense of their Safety. Just as the Possessor of a plentiful Estate, in some peaceful and prosperous Country, reposes Himself under the Shade of his Vine, or the Shelter of his Fig-tree; and, hearing of the *Wars* which embroil, or the *Plagues* which depopulate other Nations, tastes, with augmented Relish, his own Felicity.

Let me close with the affectionate and emphatical Wish of an inspired epistolary Writer. That *the LORD of Peace may give* my dear Theron *Peace ——always——by all Means* †! *Then* I shall think, my Wishes are accomplishing, and this Blessing is at the Door, when He sees the *Purity* of the divine Law —sees the *Depravity* of his own Nature—and the *Impossibility* of being justified, without an Interest in the great MEDIATOR's Righteousness. That Righteousness, which, as it is the only Hope, and the constant Joy, is therefore the darling Theme, of

Your ever faithful

ASPASIO.

P. S. Shall I *abridge* the preceding Letter, and contract the Whole into those two great Commandments, which made the first awakening

* Cant. ii. 3. † 2 Thess. iii. 16.

Impreſſions on my own Mind? *Thou ſhalt love the* LORD *thy* GOD *with* ALL *thy Heart: Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as* THYSELF.——Amazing! ſaid your *Aſpaſio*. Are *theſe* the Commands of GOD? As obligatory, as the Prohibition of Adultery, or the Obſervation of the Sabbath? Then has my whole Life been a *continual Act* of Diſobedience. Not a Day, no, nor an Hour, in which I have performed my Duty. —This Conviction ſtruck me, as the Hand-writing upon the Wall ſtruck the preſumptuous Monarch.---It purſued me, as *Saul* purſued the *Chriſtians*, not only to my own Houſe, but even to diſtant Cities.---Nor ever gave up the great Controverſy, till, under the Influences of the SPIRIT, it brought me *weary* and *heavy laden to* JESUS CHRIST.

LETTER II.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

MORE than three Weeks are elapſed, ſince You favoured me with your improving Company. During which Interval, I have frequently recollected the moſt material Parts of our late Diſcourſes. I have carefully conſidered, both the Doctrines You advanced, and the Anſwers You returned to my ſeveral Objections. I have often reviewed your valuable Letter; have uſed it as a *Touch-ſtone*, to examine my State; and have, with great Punctuality, obſerved your parting Advice.——I have ſat, every Evening, for a *Picture* of my Mind; and have endeavoured to take a true unflattering Draught of all its diſtinguiſhing Qualities. And, if the Diary is a faithful Mirror, if it does not aggravate the Deformity of my Features, I ſhall be abſolutely

abſolutely out of Conceit with myſelf; I ſhall ever entertain the *meaneſt* Opinion of my own, either moral or religious Qualifications.

Where is that intenſe and ſupreme *Love* of GOD, which his tranſcendent Perfections challenge, and his ineffable Goodneſs claims?---Where that firm and joyful *Reliance* on *CHRIST JESUS*, in any Degree proportioned to his infinite Merits and inviolable Promiſes?—Where that cordial and tender Affection for my *Fellow-chriſtians*, which is due to the Servants of a Divine REDEEMER; the People whom He ranſomed by his Agonies, and purchaſed with his very Blood.—Where is the Incenſe of holy Contemplation and refined Deſire? Where the Flame of fervent Devotion and ever active Zeal? Such as become the *living Temple* of GOD, in which his moſt immaculate and glorious SPIRIT vouchſafes to reſide.—— Theſe fundamental Graces, like the Grand Organs in the animal Syſtem, ſhould impart Health to the Soul, and ſpread the Beauty of Holineſs through all the Converſation. But theſe, alas! far from beating with a *vigorous* and *uniform* Pulſe, hardly heave with Life; only juſt ſtruggle, now and then, with ſome faint, intermitted, uneven Throws.

How ſeldom do my Actions ſpring from Gratitude to the everlaſting BENEFACTOR, or aim at the Glory of his ſuper-excellent MAJESTY? ——In addreſſing the KING immortal, inviſible, how languid are my Affections, and how wandering is my Attention? How great my Unbelief, and how little my reverential Awe?——I receive innumerable Mercies; but where are my Returns of correſpondent Thankfulneſs? I am viſited with many gracious Chaſtiſements; but without proper Reſignation, or due Improvement.—Alas for my heartleſs Devotions, my lifeleſs Virtues, and the Multitude of my *refined Iniquities!*—Hid behind the Maſk of outward Decency, and ſome cuſtomary Forms of Religion, I was altogether unacquainted with my ſpiritual State. I fanſied myſelf *rich, and increaſed with Goods, and to have Need*

of Nothing: even while I was *wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind and naked* *.

If I look back, and review the Years of Youth and Manhood, what has been the Tenour, what is the Aſpect of my Life? More like a deſolate and horrid Wilderneſs; than a cultivated Garden, or a fruitful Vineyard——In *Youth*, what ſordid Gratifications of Appetite! In *Mankind*, what baſe Compliances with a wicked World! In *both*, what Sholes of evil Inclinations have polluted my Heart! What Swarms of vain Imaginations have debaſed my Thoughts? What frothy and unprofitable Words have dropt from my Lips! ——By all which, how have I diſobeyed, and how diſhonoured GOD! How have I denied, and how crucified the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*,—— And yet ſuppoſed myſelf, all the while, to be *good enough!*

It is ſomething unaccountable, that a Perſon of my inquiſitive Diſpoſition, ſhould, through the Courſe of ſo many Years be ſuch an utter *Stranger* to Himſelf. I wonder at my own *prepoſterous* Folly!—To travel into foreign Countries, and viſit the moſt renowned Cities of *Europe*; yet never ſtep over the Threſhold, nor look within the Apartments of my own Breaſt.—To carry on a Correſpondence with my Friends, even in the remoteſt Nations; and never enter upon a Conference, nor hold any Intelligence with my own Heart!—To inquire after News from the Fleet, News from the Court; yet exerciſe neither Curioſity nor Care, with regard to the Hope of Heaven, and the Concerns of eternity!——What Egregious Miſconduct is this! A moſt pernicious Error, in the Oeconomy of religious Life.

Sometimes, I have caſt a tranſient Glance on my *outward* Behaviour; but never extended my Search to the Delinquent, the Traitor, the Rebel *within*—— And even my outward Behaviour has been ſurveyed, with as much erroneous Partiality, as ſuperficial Levity. It has been compared, not with that *exact* and *ſublime* Standard, the Scriptures of Truth; but, as in the

* Rev. iii. 17.

the Caſe of the ſelf-deceiving *Phariſee*, with the unjuſt, extortionate, adulterous Practices of ſome other People. From whence I moſt unwarrantably concluded, That, being not quite ſo abandoned as the moſt proſligate Creatures, my Character muſt be good, and my Condition ſafe.—But, Thanks to your laſt friendly Letter, and the ſearching Expedient it recommended, I am now in a different Way of thinking.

It is ſtrange to recollect, and indeed it is ſhameful to confeſs, the many *Artifices* which I have uſed, to put a *Cheat* upon myſelf——Sometimes, I have fanſied, that the divine Law could never be ſo ſtrict, as to condemn Us inexorably, if We continue not in all its Precepts——Sometimes, I have pleaded the Infirmity of our Nature, and endeavoured to make the Works of Darkneſs appear only as pitiable Failings.——Sometimes I have taken Refuge in the Excellency of our Church, and plumed myſelf with the borrowed Feathers of a religious Profeſſion.—At other Times, I have ſoothed my Conſcience to Reſt, by a Punctuality of Attendance, on Places, or a zealous Attachment to Forms. And all this, to ſeduce, cajole, and betray myſelf——betray myſelf, firſt into a vain *Conceit* of my own Endowments; then into a contemptuous *Diſregard* of *CHRIST*; and at laſt into eternal *Deſtruction*——But now I ſee my Guilt; I apprehend my Danger; and feel my helpleſs Condition.

Indeed, my *Aſpaſio*, I am now convinced, that the darkeſt Colours cannot be too dark, for the Pourtrait of my ſpiritual State. I ſee myſelf overſpread with an habitual Depravity, and cannot forbear crying out, with the abaſhed Leper; *Unclean! Unclean*!*—The ſacred Oracles in no wiſe miſrepreſent fallen Man, when they deſcribe Him as *altogether become abominable* †. They are far from under-rating human Works, when they denominate them *filthy Rags* ‡. *Rags* they

 are,

* Levit. xiii. 45. † Job xv. 16.

‡ *Iſai.* lxiv. 6. Does not *Theron* miſapply this Text? Can it be intended to diſcredit the Qualifications of the *Upright*? Is it not rather a Brand ſet upon the Works of the *Wicked*; whoſe very "Sacrifices are an Abomination to the LORD? Or, a Rebuke given to the ſpecious Performances of the *Hypocrite*; who is preciſe

are, if We conſider their great Imperfection; *filthy* Rags, if we advert to their manifold Defilements.—And ſince the Nature of GOD is ſo irreconcilably averſe to all Contamination; ſince the Law of GOD requires ſuch unſpotted Perfection; O! *Who can ſtand before this holy LORD GOD* *, in any Accompliſhments of their own?

When

preciſe in the Form, but deſtitute of the Power of Godlineſs? Or, may it not refer to *ritual* Obſervances; in Contradiſtinction to moral Duties, and ſpiritual Accompliſhments?

The diſparaging Character muſt not, I think, be confined to ritual Obſervances; becauſe it is expreſly ſaid, ALL *our Righteouſneſſes*, including every Kind of religious Duty.——Neither can it be appropriated to the *formal* Hypocrite, much leſs to the *notoriouſly* Wicked; becauſe, thoſe very Perſons, who are the Subject of this Affection declare in the Context; *LORD, We are thy People; Thou art our FATHER; We ſhall be ſaved.*—*So that* it ſeems intended to *ſtain the Pride of all* human *Glory*.

Beſides: the Prophet ſpeaks of *himſelf*; WE *all are as an unclean Thing*. Which, however ſtrange or unreaſonable it may ſeem, is the very ſame Charge, to which He pleads guilty in another Place; *Wo is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips!* Not that He was defiled with any groſs Pollutions; nay, He was a Saint of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Luſtre; but *his Eyes had ſeen the KING, the LORD of Hoſts*. He was under the clear Manifeſtations of a GOD, glorious in Holineſs, inflexible in Juſtice, and infinite in all Perfections.——Amidſt theſe Manifeſtations, the Impurity of his Heart and Nature, were not only apparent, but glaring; overwhelmed Him with Abaſhment, and, till *CHRIST* was applied in a Type, (*Iſai.* vi. 7.) filled Him with Terror.

In *ſuch* Circumſtances, and under *ſuch* Views, all our moral Virtues and evangelical Graces, all our Exerciſes of Devotion, and Acts of Charity, will appear both defective and polluted. By no means proportioned to the Demands of the Law, nor ſufficient for our Recommendation to the Supreme LAW-GIVER—no more than a few tattered Rags, can claim the Character, or perform the Services, of a complete Suit——no more than a few *filthy* Rags are fit, to dreſs the Bride for her Nuptials, or the Courtier for a Birth-night

But there is a Righteouſneſs—bleſſed be divine Grace!—ſpotleſsly pure and conſummately excellent: a Righteouſneſs, which anſwers all that the CREATOR requires, and ſupplies all that the Creature needs: to prove this momentous Point, and to diſplay this unſpeakable Gift, is the Deſign of the following Sheets.

* 1 Sam. vi. 20.

When I farther reflect, that I have only a very obscure Glimpse of the divine Purity, and am a mere Novice in the Knowledge of my own Heart; how am I amazed at the lofty Apprehensions which I once formed, concerning the *Dignity* of my Nature, and the *Integrity* of my Conduct! All owing to Ignorance, the grossest Ignorance of myself and the Scriptures.—How do I shudder to think, that in expecting Justification from the Law, I was resting the Welfare of my immortal Soul, not on the Foundation of a Rock, but on the Point of a Dagger.—I was going to the decisive Tribunal, flushed with the falsest Hopes, and charged with a Set of glittering Sins: going, like poor deluded *Uriah* *, not with any valid Credentials, but with *the Ministration of Death* † in my Hand.

Though I cannot but acknowledge the Arrogance of these Pretensions, yet loth, very loth, is my Pride, to renounce the pleasing Absurdity. Self love has searched, and searched again, for something excellent. It would fain make a better Appearance, and can hardly brook the Humiliation of imploring all *sub Forma Pauperis* ‡. With what Reluctance is a Sinner brought to confess Himself, sinful in every Duty, sinful in every Capacity! Strange Perverseness!—But the Charge is undeniable. However unwilling, I must plead guilty. THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND FOUND WANTING §, is evidently written on all I *am*, all I *have*, all I *do*.—And if I am thus defective, even in my own Estimation; if I am utterly condemned, at the Bar of my own Conscience; *What then shall I do, when GOD riseth up? And when HE visiteth, what shall I answer Him* ‖?

I now see the *Necessity* of an imputed Righteousness. Without some such Object for my Trust I am undone. I long therefore to hear your *Arguments* in its Behalf. And I must declare to You, if it can be

 satisfactorily

* 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15. † 2 Cor. iii. 9.

‡ That is under the Character of a *poor Destitute*, or as a Beggar sues for his Alms.

§ Dan. v. 27. ‖ Job xxxi. 14.

ſatisfactorily proved from the Scriptures, it is the moſt comfortable Doctrine in the World, and worthy of all Acceptation.

A Letter upon this Subject, would be a ſingular Favour, and, I hope, an equal Bleſſing to

Your obliged, and affectionate,

THERON.

LETTER III.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THough all your Letters give me Pleaſure, none was ever ſo highly pleaſing as your laſt. I look upon it with the ſame ſecret Joy, as a compaſſionate Phyſician obſerves ſome *very favourable* Symptoms, in the Criſis of a beloved Patient's Diſtemper.

What You aſk, I ſhall, without any farther Preface, attempt to execute. If my Attempt proves ſatisfactory to your Judgment, I am ſure, it will be the moſt likely Means, of *healing* your Conſcience, and *calming* your Fears.—When we perceive the odious Depravity of our Nature; when We diſcern the horrible Iniquity of our Lives; and are ſenſible of that tremendous Wrath, and everlaſting Vengeance, which are due to ſuch guilty Creatures: *then* nothing can be found, that will ſpeak effectual Peace, nothing that will adminiſter ſolid Comfort, but only the vicarious Sufferings and the imputed Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*.

To this Purpoſe ſpeaks one of the wiſeſt and beſt of ſpiritual Guides; *Has Sin abounded?* As undoubtedly it has, in our Heart and our Life: *Grace has much more abounded*, in the Obedience, and the Merits of our REDEEMER ——Nay, *has Sin reigned?* Exerted

Exerted its malignant Power, in the moſt extenſive and moſt deſtructive Manner; rendering Us ſubject *unto Death*, both temporal and eternal? *Even ſo has Grace reigned*; exerted its benign Efficacy, and in a Manner yet more triumphant; not only reſcuing Us from Guilt and Ruin, but reſtoring Us *to everlaſting Life* and Glory. And all this *through* the *Righteouſneſs*, the complete meritorious Righteouſneſs, brought in by *JESUS CHRIST our LORD* *.

You inquire after the *Proofs* of this imputed Righteouſneſs. From a Multitude I ſhall ſelect a few. Sufficient, I hope, to make it appear——That this is the declared Doctrine of our *Church*, and the avowed Belief of her *moſt eminent* Divines—That it is copiouſly revealed through the whole SCRIPTURES; revealed in many expreſs Paſſages, and deducible from a Variety of inſtructive Similitudes.

Hear the Language of our Common Prayer, in a very affecting and ſolemn Addreſs to the ALMIGHTY: "We do not preſume to come to this thy Table, O "merciful LORD, truſting in our own Righteouſneſs." ——If we may not, if we dare not rely, on our own Righteouſneſs, when we approach the *euchariſtic Table*; much leſs may we depend upon it, when we are ſummoned to the *deciſive Tribunal*.——Should you aſk, On what we are to depend? The Exhortation to the Communion furniſhes an Anſwer; "On the meritorious Death and Paſſion of *CHRIST*, whereby *alone* "we obtain Remiſſion of Sins, and are made Partakers "of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Collect, appointed for the Feſtival of *Circumciſion*, has this remarkable Introduction; "Almighty "GOD, whoſe bleſſed SON was *obedient to the* "*Law for Man*": In what Senſe, or with what Propriety, can this be affirmed? Unleſs *CHRIST's* perfect Obedience be referable to Us, and accepted inſtead of ours? On any other Interpretation, I ſhould think, He was obedient, not for *Man*, but for *Himſelf*.

* Rom. v. 21.

Should the artful Critic give ſome other Turn to theſe Paſſages, it will avail Him but little. Becauſe the Church, her own *beſt* Expoſitor, has explained the Meaning of ſuch Phraſes, and put the Matter beyond all Doubt. In her eleventh Article ſhe ſays; "We are "accounted righteous before GOD only for the "Merits of our LORD and SAVIOUR "*JESUS CHRIST*."—The Doctrine relating to Pardon of Sin, had been ſtated in a preceding Article. This diſplays the Method, whereby Sinners may appear righteous in the Eye of GOD, and in the Court of Heaven; ſo as to recover the divine Favour, and obtain a Title to eternal Bliſs. This is done, not by any *native* Righteouſneſs, not by any *acquired* Righteouſneſs, but by an *imputed* Righteouſneſs. Were We juſtified by either of the former Methods, it would not have been ſaid, We are *accounted*, but we are righteous. They are ſo far from conſtituting our reconciling and juſtifying Righteouſneſs, that they have no Share in it; contribute nothing towards it; are totally excluded from it. We are accounted righteous, and accepted as ſuch, ONLY (mark the Expreſſion) ONLY through the meritorious Obedience, and propitiating Blood of our great MEDIATOR.

The Homilies are, if it be poſſible, ſtill more explicit, and more cogent. In the Homily concerning the Salvation of Mankind, we read the following Words; —"The Apoſtle toucheth three Things, which "muſt go together in our Juſtification. On GOD's "Part his great Mercy and Grace. On *CHRIST*'s "Part, the Satisfaction of GOD's Juſtice, or the "Price of our Redemption, by the Offering of his "Body, and Shedding of his Blood, with Fulfilling "of the Law perfectly. On our Part, true and lively "Faith in the Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*, "which yet is not ours, but by GOD's working "in Us.—You ſee, according to the Judgment of our venerable Reformers, not only the Offering of *CHRIST*'s Body, and Shedding of *CHRIST*'s Blood, but alſo his *perfect Fulfilling* of the Law, are the

the adequate Price of our Redemption. All these act conjointly, they sweetly harmonize, in the great and glorious Work. To suppose their Disunion, is a *doctrinal* Mistake, somewhat like that *practical* Error of the Papists in severing the sacramental Wine from the sacramental Bread; administering to the Laity the Symbols of the slaughtered Body, but with-holding the Symbols of the streaming Blood.

There are other Clauses in the same Homily, which set the Seal of the Church to our Sentiments. I shall content myself with transcribing one from the Conclusion.—"*CHRIST*, says that Form of sound "Words, is the Righteousness of all them, that do "truly believe. He for them paid their Ransom by "his Death. He for them fulfilled the Law in his "Life. So that now, in HIM, and by HIM, eve-"ry true *christian* Man may be called a Fulfiller of "the Law; forasmuch as that which their Infirmity "lacked, *CHRIST*'s Righteousness hath supplied." —This Authority is as clear, as the Doctrine authorized is comfortable. May the former sway our Judgment! May the latter chear our Hearts!

The Homily on *CHRIST*'s Nativity informs the Reader, that the Design of our LORD's Incarnation was—"To give Light unto the World, and call "Sinners to Repentance; to *fulfil the Law for Us*, "and become the Propitiation for our Sins; to cast "out the Prince of this World, and destroy the "Works of the Devil."—We have all broke the Law; We are all unable to keep the Law; therefore, the blessed *JESUS* fulfilled the Law —— fulfilled it, in *each* and *every* of its Demands——fulfilled it, in the *highest* Degree of Perfection——and, what is of all Considerations most delightful, fulfilled it *for Us*. His Obedience took the Place of what We were obliged to perform, under the Covenant of Works; and is not only the meritorious, but also the constituent Cause of our Justification.

So that —— if there be any Worthiness in our LORD's most holy Nature; any Merit in his Exercise

exercise of the sublimest Virtues; completed by his Submission to the most ignominious Sufferings, and tormenting Death——then, according to this Standard-System of orthodox Divinity, these are the *Ground*, these are the *Substance* of a Sinner's Justification.—— And, according to the Dictates of the most unbiassed Reason, they are the *best*, the *surest* Ground, that can either be wished or imagined.

Does it not, from the preceding Quotations, appear; That the Doctrine of Justification through the imputed Righteousness of our REDEEMER, is far from being disclaimed by the *established Church?* —I am sorry, but constrained to own, that We rarely find any considerable Stricture of this great evangelical Peculiarity, in our *modern* theological Discourses. Yet there have been Preachers of the highest Repute for Learning, for Judgment, and for Piety, who professedly maintained this grand Truth of the Gospel.

The devout Bishop *Beveridge*, in his *Private Thoughts*, has left upon Record the following very remarkable Acknowledgment. Which, if it suited *his* State of eminent Holiness, cannot be too humbling, my dear *Theron*, for your Lips and for mine. "I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I ever "prayed, in all my Life time, with that Reverence, "or heard with that Attention, or received the Sa- "crament with that Faith, or did any Work with "that pure Heart, and single Eye, as I ought to "have done. Insomuch, that I look upon all my "Righteousness, but as filthy Rags; and it is in the "Robes only of the Righteousness of the SON of "GOD, that I dare appear before the MAJESTY of "Heaven."

The fervent and affectionate Bishop *Hopkins* * speaks in perfect Consonance with his Brother of *St. Asaph*.——"The Law was given Us, not that We "should seek Justification by the Observance of it, "but finding it impossible to be justified by fulfilling "it, We should thereby be driven to *CHRIST*'s "Righteousness; who hath both fulfilled it in Him- "self,

* See his Sermon on *John* vii. 19.

" ſelf and ſatisfied for our tranſgreſſing of it; and " therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *The Law was a School-* " *maſter, to bring Us unto CHRIST; that We might* " *be juſtified by Faith.* To this End it was promulged, " that ſeeing the Strictneſs of its Precepts, the Rigour " of its Threatenings, and withal being convinced of " our Impotence to fulfil its Commands, We might " be urged by its Terrors to fly to *CHRIST*, and " find that Righteouſneſs in Him which may anſwer " all the Demands of the Law."

Biſhop *Reynolds* †, ſtyled by his Contemporaries, and not without Reaſon, *A walking Library*, bears his Teſtimony in the following Words; — " *CHRIST* " as our Surety paid our Debt, underwent the Curſe " due to our Sins, and bare them all in his own Body " on the Tree: became ſubject to the Law for Us, " and repreſentatively in our Stead fulfilled all the " Righteouſneſs the Law required, active and paſſive. " For Sin being once committed, there muſt be a dou- " ble Act to Juſtification; the Suffering of the Curſe, " and the Fulfilling of Righteouſneſs anew. The " one, a Satisfaction for the Injury we have done to " GOD, as our JUDGE: the other, the Perfor- " mance of a Service which We owe unto Him, as " our MAKER."

To this illuſtrious Triumvirate, let me join Biſhop *Davenant*. Who, for his great Abilities, and unqueſtionable Integrity, was appointed one of our religious Plenipotentiaries, at the renowned Synod of *Dort*. In his very valuable Expoſition of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, He writes to this Effect: " *Ye are complete in* " *CHRIST.* Ye are furniſhed, in that all-ſufficient " REDEEMER, with whatever is requiſite to everlaſt- " ing Salvation. With *Wiſdom*; ſince it is the Conſum- " mation of this noble Endowment, to know *CHRIST* " and Him crucified. With *Righteouſneſs*; becauſe " He

† See his Treatiſe intitled *The Life of CHRIST.*——Which, as well as all his other Works, abound with ſtriking Sentiments; have much Elegance of Diction, a copious Variety of Learning, and a lively animating Spirit of evangelical Piety.

" He has perfectly satisfied the Law *, and thoroughly " expiated our Guilt. With *Sanctification*; because " his SPIRIT dwelling in our Hearts, mortifies our " corrupt Affections, and renews the Soul after the " Image of its CREATOR."

Let me bring up the *Rear* with a Testimony, which, for Clearness, Solidity, and a full Representation of the evangelical Doctrine, might very justly have claimed a place in the *Van*. It is taken from an Author, whom the general Consent of our Nation has distinguished with the Title of *Judicious*. The judicious *Hooker*, in a Treatise on Justification, says;—— " It is a childish Cavil our Adversaries so greatly " please themselves with, exclaiming, that We tread " all *Christian* Virtues under our Feet; because We " teach, That Faith alone justifieth. Whereas, by " this Speech, We never meant to exclude either " Hope or Charity from being always joined as inse- " parable Mates with Faith, in the Man that is justi- " fied: or Works from being added, as necessary " Duties required of every justified Man: but to " shew, that Faith is the only Hand, which putteth " on *CHRIST* to Justification; and *CHRIST* " the only Garment, which being so put on, covereth " the Shame of our defiled Natures, hideth the Im- " perfection of our Works, and preserveth Us blame- " less in the Sight of GOD: before whom, other- " wise, the Weakness of our Faith were Cause suf- " ficient to make Us culpable, yea, to shut Us out of " the

* In this Respect principally (says our Author, inlarging upon the Text) are Believers *complete*; because, though destitute of any Righteousness, that may properly be called *their own*, *CHRIST* has graciously enriched them with *his*. *Vid.* DAVENANT, in *Epist. ad Coloss. Cap.* ii. *Com.* 10.

Let me beg leave to intimate, That this Exposition of the Epistle to the *Colossians* — for Perspicuity of Style, and Accuracy of Method——for Judgment in discerning, and Fidelity in representing, the Apostle's Meaning ——for Strength of Argument in refuting Errors, and Felicity of Invention in deducing practical Doctrines, tending both to the Establishment of Faith, and the Cultivation of Holiness—is, I think inferior to no Writing of the Kind; and richly deserves to be *read*, to be *studied*, to be *imitated*, by our young Divines.

" the Kingdom of Heaven, where nothing that is not " abſolute can enter."

You will allow the ſagacious Biſhop *Sanderſon* * to ſum up the Evidence; or rather to make an important Remark on the Whole of the Controverſy. That great Light of the Church, both in caſuiſtical and practical Divinity, obſerves;—" The Tidings " of a REDEEMER muſt be bleſſed and wel- " come News, to thoſe that are ſenſible of their own " Poverty, and take it of Grace." Our eagle-eyed Divine penetrates into the *true* Cauſe of the prevailing Averſeneſs to this evangelical Doctrine. It is founded on the *State* of the *Heart*, more than upon any Force of Argument. People are but little, if at all, ſenſible, of their ſpiritual and moral Indigence; of the Defects which depreciate, and the Defilements which ſully, whatever they have, and whatever they do. Nay, ſtrongly tinctured with Pride, they would be themſelves the *Alpha*, and ſuffer the Bleſſed *JESUS* to be no more than the *Omega*, in procuring their eternal Salvation. Therefore they can hardly be reconciled to the humbling Character of an *Eleemoſynary*; one who lives wholly upon the Alms of the Goſpel, and is dependant upon Grace for his All.

Whereas, was this grand Obſtacle once removed; were Men *convinced of Sin*, of exceeding Sinfulneſs in their worſt Eſtate, and of remaining Sinfulneſs in their beſt; they would ſoon be convinced of *Righteouſneſs* †, of the abſolute Neceſſity and ineſtimable Worth of a REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. They would no longer diſpute againſt it, but cordially receive it; intirely rely on it; and adore the Goodneſs, the tranſcendent and unutterable Goodneſs of GOD, in providing it.

I think, in one of our Conferences, I undertook to produce my Vouchers from the antient *Fathers*. Let me now ſubjoin two or three Atteſtations of this Kind.——From *one* of which You will perceive, that thoſe early Writers had a conſiderable Degree of Clear-

* See his Sermon upon *Iſai.* lii. 3.
† John xvi. 8.

Clearneſs upon the Point. From the *other* You will ſee, that, far from rejecting the Doctrine, they embrace it with Delight and Rapture. And if You will admit of the *laſt*, You cannot be ſtartled at any Thing, which I ſhall advance upon the Subject.—Let me only premiſe in general, that, if thoſe Authors are not ſo copious and explicit, with regard to the Imputation of *active* Righteouſneſs; they abound in Paſſages, which evince the *Subſtitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead. Paſſages, which diſclaim all Dependence on any Duties of our own, and fix the Hopes of a Believer intirely on the Merits of his SAVIOUR. When this is the Caſe, I am very little ſolicitous about any particular Forms of Expreſſion; and far from being angry, even though the Words, which I think moſt ſignificant, are not retained.

Clemens—an intimate Acquaintance of St. *Paul*'s, and whoſe *Name was in the Book of Life* * — in his truly excellent Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, aſſures that People †: *We are not*, in any reſpect or in any Degree, *juſtified by Ourſelves*, but wholly by *JESUS CHRIST: not by our own Wiſdom or Prudence*, which could never find out the Way; *not by the Piety of our Hearts, or Works of Righteouſneſs performed in our Lives*, which could never be ſufficient for the Purpoſe; *but by Faith*. The one invariable Method, *by which the Almighty SOVEREIGN has juſtified all* his People, *ever ſince the World began*.

Juſtin—who was firſt a *Gentile* Philoſopher, then an eminent *Chriſtian*, and at laſt a *Martyr* for the Truth

* Phil. iv. 3.

† Ου δι εαυτων δικαιουμεθα, ουδε δια της ημετερας σοφιας, η συνεσεως, η ευσεβειας, η εργων ων κατειργασαμεθα εν οσιοτητι, καρδιας· αλλα δια της πιστεως, δι ης παντας τους απ' αιωνος ο παντοκρατωρ Θεος εδικαιωσεν. 1 Epiſt. ad Corinth.—This Quotation is *explained*, as well as *tranſlated*. But that every Reader may diſtinguiſh the Text from the Paraphraſe, the firſt is printed in *Italic*, the laſt in *Roman* Characters.

Truth—ſpeaks more fully to the Point *. *What elſe could cover our Sins, but the Righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST? By what poſſible Means could We, unrighteous and unholy Creatures, be juſtified, but only by the* Interpoſition of the *SON of GOD* in our Behalf?—Having, in this Clauſe, made a Profeſſion of his Faith; the good Man, on the Contemplation of ſuch a Privilege, breaks out into a kind of holy Tranſport. O SWEET AND DELIGHTFUL EXCHANGE! *A Diſpenſation unſearchably wiſe and gracious! Benefits, quite unexpected, and rich beyond all our Hopes! That the Sin of Many ſhould be hid by one righteous PERSON; and that the Righteouſneſs of ONE, ſhould juſtify many Tranſgreſſors.*

The following Words are remarkably ſtrong, and the Sentiments peculiarly bold. But they come from the Pen of the fineſt Writer in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquity. They have the great Name, and venerable Character of St. *Chryſoſtom*, for their recommendatory Preface †—*Fear not*, ſays He, *on Account of any of thy paſt Tranſgreſſions of the Law, when once Thou haſt fled by Faith to JESUS CHRIST. The moſt enormous and the moſt deſtructive Violation of the Law, is, To be with-held, by the Conſciouſneſs of any Guilt whatever, from believing on CHRIST. When Thou acteſt Faith on Him, Thou haſt fulfilled, I might ſay, more than fulfilled the Law. For Thou haſt received a better Righteouſneſs,*

* Τι αλλο τας αμαρτιας ημων ηδυνηθη καλυψα, η εκεινη δικαιοσυνη; Εν τινι δικαιωθηναι δυναται τας ανομιας ημας ϗ ασεβειας, η εν τω υιω τυ Θευ; Ω ΤΗΣ ΓΛΥΚΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΤΑΛΛΑΓΗΣ, ω της ανεξιχνιαστυ δημιυργιας, ω των απροσδοκητων δε ενος πολλας ανομιας δικαιωσης. Epiſt. ad Diogn.——Though *Du Pin* queſtions the Authority of this Epiſtle, He allows it to have been written by an antient Hand. Dr. *Cave*, as capable a Judge, thinks there is no Reaſon to doubt, but it is the genuine Work of *Juſtin*.

† Μη τοινυν φοβηθης, ως τον νομον παραβεβηκως, επειδαν τη πιστει προσηλθης· τοτε γαρ αυτον παραβαινεις, ότε δι αυτον τω Χριστω μη πιστευσης· ως αν πιστευσης αυτω, κακεινον επληρωσας ϗ πολλω πλειον η εκελευσε· πολλω γαρ μειζονα δικαιοσυνην ελαβες. Homil. XVI in X. ad Rom.

teousneſs, than it could ever require: Thou art poſſeſſed of a better Obedience, than any Creature could poſſibly pay.

Two or three Witneſſes of *diſtinguiſhed Ability*, and *undoubted Veracity*, are a ſufficient Confirmation of any Cauſe. For this Reaſon, and to avoid a tireſome Prolixity, I have ſet aſide a Multitude of Voices; which from the Writings of our own and foreign Divines, are ready to pour their united Evidence.—— And leſt the Buſineſs of Quotation, though ſparingly managed, ſhould ſeem dry and tedious; I will relieve your Wearineſs, and inliven the Collection, by an Extract from the Prince of *Engliſh* Poetry.—*Michael*, the prophetic Archangel, mentioning the deſtructive Conſequences of the Fall; and aſſerting the GOD-HEAD of that glorious PERSON, who undertook to be the Repairer of this deadly Breach; adds,

Which HE, who comes thy SAVIOUR, ſhall ſecure,
Not by deſtroying Satan, but his Works,
In Thee and in Thy Seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling (that which Thou didſt want)
Obedience to the Law of GOD, *impos'd*
On Penalty of Death; and ſuffering Death,
The Penalty to thy Tranſgreſſion due;
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow.
So ONLY *can high Juſtice reſt appaid* *.

Here then is the expreſs Determination of our *Homilies*—ſupported by the Authority of our *Articles*—eſtabliſhed by the Concurrence of our *Liturgy*—ſtill farther ratified by the unanimous Atteſtation of ſeveral celebrated *Divines*; whoſe Lives were the brighteſt Ornament to our Church, and whoſe Writings are the moſt unexceptionable Interpretation of her Meaning ——As a Capital, to crown and complete this grand Column, ſupervenes the Declaration of the antient *Fathers*; thoſe who flouriſhed, and with the higheſt Renown, in the firſt and pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity. — So that, if great Authorities carry any Weight; if illuſtrious Names challenge any Regard; this

* MILTON, Book XII. 393.

this Tenet comes attended and dignified with very conſiderable *Credentials*.

Yet I will venture to affirm, that all theſe, conſiderable as they appear, are the *leaſt* of thoſe Teſtimonials, which recommend the Doctrine to my *Theron*'s Acceptance, and which have gained it Admittance into the Heart of

His moſt affectionate

ASPASIO.

LETTER IV.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

THE Family in which I have the Satisfaction to reſide, though remarkable for their genteel Figure and ample Fortune, are ſtill more amiably diſtinguiſhed by their *Benevolence*, *Hoſpitality*, and *Charity*. —As they live at a Diſtance from the Market-town, the Lady has converted one Apartment of her Houſe into a little Diſpenſatory; and ſtocked it with ſome of the moſt common, the moſt needed, and moſt ſalutary Medicines. Which, in Caſes of *ordinary* Indiſpoſition, She diſtributes to her indigent Neighbours, with ſingular Compaſſion, and with no ſmall Succeſs —This fine Morning, *Emilia* has ordered ſome ſkilful Hands into the Fields, to cull their healing Simples, and lay up a Magazine of Health for the afflicted Poor. *Camillus* is withdrawn, to receive his Rents, and ſettle Accounts with his Tenants.

Suppoſe, We act in Concert with theſe valuable Perſons. Suppoſe, We range the delightful Fields of Scripture, and form a Collection, not of ſalutiferous Herbs, but of ineſtimable Texts; ſuch as may be of ſove-

ſovereign Efficacy, to *aſſuage* the Anguiſh of a guilty Conſcience, and impart *ſaving Health* to the diſtempered Soul.—Suppoſe, We open the Mines of divine Inſpiration, and enrich Ourſelves, not with the Gold of *Ophir*, but with the unſearchable *Treaſures* of *CHRIST*, or with that perfect Righteouſneſs of our REDEEMER, which is incomparably more precious, than the Revenues of a Country, or the Produce of *Peru*.

In pleading for imputed Righteouſneſs, We have already urged the Authority of our eſtabliſhed Church, and the Suffrage of her moſt eminent Divines.—The Opinion of excellent Writers, which has been the Reſult of much Learning, great Attention, and earneſt Prayer, is no contemptible Evidence. Yet We muſt always reſerve the *caſting* Voice for thoſe infallible Umpires, the Prophets and Apoſtles. *If we receive*, with a deferential Regard, *the Witneſs of Men*; *the Witneſs of GOD is greater* *, and challenges the moſt implicit Submiſſion.—Which Remark naturally leads me to the intended Subject of this Epiſtle; or rather calls upon me to fulfil my late Engagement, and ſhew —That the above-mentioned Doctrine is copiouſly revealed, through the whole Proceſs of the Scriptures.

Let me detach a very ſignificant Portion from the Epiſtle to the *Romans*; which, though little inferior to a deciſive Proof, is produced only as an Introduction to others. *Now the Righteouſneſs of GOD without the Law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the Law and the Prophets*; *even the Righteouſneſs of GOD, which is by Faith of JESUS CHRIST unto all, and upon all them that believe* †. *The Righteouſneſs of GOD*, ſignifies that Righteouſneſs, which the incarnate GOD wrought out in his own all-glorious Perſon ‡. It is ſtyled the Righteouſneſs of GOD, by way

* 1 John v. 9. † Rom. iii. 21, 22.

‡ This Explication, or ſomething to the ſame Purpoſe, has occurred already. But it is hoped, the candid Reader will not condemn the Repetition, as a *diſagreeable* and *jejune* Tautology.—Becauſe, it is ſo conſonant to the Practice of our great Apoſtle, who

way of ſuperlative Pre-eminence; in Oppoſition to any Righteouſneſs of our own, and in Contradiſtinction to the Righteouſneſs of all Creatures whatever.—This Righteouſneſs is *without the Law.* Its Efficacy has no Dependence on, its Merit receives no Addition from, any Conformity of our Practice to the divine Law: being complete, abſolutely complete in itſelf, and altogether ſufficient to procure the Reconciliation and Acceptance of Sinners.—— This Righteouſneſs is *witneſſed by the Law and the Prophets*; receives an uniform Atteſtation from the various Writings of the Old Teſtament. To inveſtigate which Atteſtation, to examine its Pertinency, and weigh its Sufficiency, is our preſent pleaſing Buſineſs.

We may begin with that gracious Declaration, made to the firſt Tranſgreſſors: *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head* *; ſhall deſtroy the Works of the Devil, and retrieve whatever was loſt by his malicious Artifices †. How could this be effected, but by reſtoring that Righteouſneſs, which, for a while, our firſt Parents poſſeſſed; which they ought always to have held faſt; but from which they ſo ſoon and ſo unhappily ſwerved? Take the Poſition in the right Senſe, and *Chriſtianity is*, if not intirely, yet very nearly *as old as the Creation.* It was comprehended in this bleſſed Promiſe, as the *Stamina* of the largeſt Plants are contained in the Subſtance of their

who repeats the Term, reinculcates the Doctrine, and hardly knows how to deſiſt from the favourite Topic: like One, who was quite enamoured with the Subject; who found Muſic in the Words; and whoſe Happineſs was bound up in the Bleſſing.—Becauſe, it is conformable to another, and a greater Example. The LORD JEHOVAH Himſelf, within the Compaſs of *one* Chapter, once and again, yea, a third and a fourth Time, ſtyles this wonderful Obedience, MY RIGHTEOUSNESS. As though the GOD of infinite Perfection *gloried* in it; thought Himſelf moſt *eminently* magnified by it; and was jealous to have all the Honour reſulting from it. See *Iſai.* li.

* Gen. iii. 15.

† In ſome ſuch Senſe, I think, our firſt Parents muſt underſtand the Promiſe. Otherwiſe it could yield them no *effectual* Relief, under the diſtreſſing Senſe of their own Miſery, and the diſmal Apprehenſion of their Poſterity's Ruin.

their reſpective Seeds. Every ſubſequent Revelation being no more, than a *gradual Evolution* of this grand evangelical Principle; acting like the vegetative Powers of Nature, which, in rearing an Oak with all its Spread of Branches, only expand the Tunicles, and fill up the Veſſels of the Acorn.

This Doctrine ſeems to have been typically taught by the remarkable Manner of *clothing* our firſt Parents. —All they could do for their own Recovery, was like the patched and beggarly Mantle of *Fig-leaves*. This they relinquiſh, and GOD himſelf furniſhes them with Apparel *. Animals are ſlain, not for Food but *Sacrifice*; and the naked Criminals are arrayed with the Skins of thoſe ſlaughtered Beaſts. The Victims figured the *Expiation* of *CHRIST*'s Death; the Clothing typified the *Imputation* of his Righteouſneſs —In perfect Conformity, perhaps with a Reference, to the Paſſage thus interpreted, the Apoſtle juſt now expreſſed Himſelf; *even the Righteouſneſs of GOD, which is* not only made over † to all Believers, as a rich Portion; but put † *upon all* as a beautiful Garment. Whereby alone their moral Deformity can be covered, and their everlaſting Confuſion prevented.—*Milton*, it is certain, ſpeaking of this memorable Tranſaction, conſiders it in the ſame ſpiritual Senſe:

Nor HE their outward only with the Skins
Of Beaſts, but inward Nakedneſs *(much more*
Opprobious!) with his Robe of Righteouſneſs
Arraying, *covered from his FATHER's Sight.*

In thy Seed, ſays the great JEHOVAH to his Servant *Abraham*, *ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed* ‡. That the Seed here mentioned is *CHRIST* the Apoſtle § places beyond all Doubt. Both Scripture

* Gen. iii. 21.

† † *Rom.* iii. 22. ΕΙΣ παντας, ΕΠΙ παντας τους πιστευοντας. ‡ Gen. xxii. 18.

§ See St. *Paul*'s Comment upon this invaluable Promiſe, *Gal.* iii. 8. *&c. This* Commentator, We all allow, was guided by the SPIRIT, and knew the Mind of GOD. According to his Expoſition of the Text, it is pregnant with the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, and contains an Abridgment of the Goſpel.

ture and Reaſon declare, That *true Bleſſedneſs* muſt neceſſarily include——the Pardon of Sins, and the Favour of GOD—the Sanctification of our Souls, and the Inheritance of Life eternal. None of which are to be acquired by any human Performances: but all are to be ſought, and all may be found, in the Root and Offspring of *Abraham*, *JESUS CHRIST*. Who is therefore moſt pertinently ſtyled, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS *: The *actual* Deſire of every inlightened Nation; and the *implicit* Deſire of all Nations whatever. Becauſe all, without any Exception, covet, what is to be derived only from *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous, *real* Happineſs.

The patriarchal Age, and the legal Oeconomy, bore their Teſtimony to this Truth, by typical Perſons, emblematical Miracles, and figurative Uſages. Indeed, the whole ceremonial Service was a grand *Series* of Types, repreſenting *CHRIST* and his everlaſting Righteouſneſs. In all which, this was the *unanimous*, though ſilent Language; *Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the Sin of the World.*—— Theſe I ſhall not ſtay to diſcuſs, becauſe Proofs of a more explicit and poſitive Nature wait for our Conſideration. Only I would juſt make a tranſient Obſervation, relating to one very remarkable Conſtitution in the *Jewiſh* Ritual.

The High-prieſt had, on the Front of his Mitre, a Plate of pure Gold, engraven with that venerable Motto †, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. Which was always to be on his Forehead, when He performed the ſolemn Miniſtrations of the Sanctuary; and for this important Reaſon, that the People *might be accepted before the LORD* ‡. Did not this moſt clearly foreſhew the immaculate Holineſs of our great HIGH-PRIEST? And with equal Clearneſs imply, that *his* Holineſs ſhould procure Acceptance for all his Followers?

In

* Hag. ii. 7. † Exod. xxviii. 36, 37.
‡ Exod. xxviii. 38.

In the Book of *Job*, We have ſeveral Hints of this Truth; and one Paſſage very expreſs to our Purpoſe. —*Elihu* deſcribes an unconverted Perſon, under the chaſtiſing Hand of Providence. *Whoſe Life*, through the Extremity of his Diſeaſe, *drew near to the Grave*; *and his Soul*, through the Multitude of his Iniquities, was ready to become a Prey *to the Deſtroyers*. In this deplorable Condition, *if there be* preſent *with Him*, *the MESSENGER* * of the Covenant of Peace; *that* great *INTERPRETER* * of the divine Counſels, who, for his ſuper-excellent Wiſdom, is juſtly deemed *One among a thouſand*, or rather the chiefeſt among ten thouſand. If He, by his inlightening SPIRIT, vouchſafe to *ſhew unto* the afflicted *Man his* own perfect Righteouſneſs; that moſt meritorious *Uprightneſs*, on which alone a Sinner may depend, both for temporal and eternal Salvation. *Then* the poor diſtreſſed Creature, attentive to this Inſtruction, and applying this Righteouſneſs, is made Partaker of Pardon. *GOD*, the ſovereign LORD of Life and Death, *is gracious unto Him*; *and ſaith*, in the Greatneſs of his Strength, as well as in the Multitude of his Mercies, *Deliver Him from going down into the Pit* of Corruption, as a Pledge of his Deliverance from the Pit of Perdition. For, *I have found a Ranſom*, ſufficient to ſatisfy my Juſtice. I have received an Atonement, in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled Tranſgreſſor.

But why do I ſelect *one* particular Paragraph? It ſeems to be the main Deſign of the *whole* Book, to overthrow all Pretenſions of any juſtifying Righteouſneſs

* * See *Job.* xxxiii. 22, *&c.*— *CHRIST*, is called מַלְאָךְ *The Angel of* the divine *Preſence*, Iſai. lxiii. 9. *The Meſſenger of the Covenant*, Mal. iii. 1.—He is alſo, in the moſt unlimited Senſe of the Phraſe, מֵלִיץ *The Interpreter* of the divine Counſels: He to whom the FATHER hath given the Tongue of the Learned, and by whom He makes known the otherwiſe unſearchable Myſteries of the Goſpel.—Should any Doubt remain, concerning the Propriety of applying this Paſſage to our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, the Reader, I hope, will give himſelf the Pleaſure of peruſing the polite *Witſius*, *Oecon.* Lib. IV. Cap. iii. § xxxi. and Dr. *Grey*'s valuable Notes upon the Place, in his *Liber Jobi*.

neſs in Man. That the wretched Sinner, nay, that the greateſt Saint, ſtript of every perſonal Plea, may rely on the Merits of a REDEEMER. This is the final Iſſue of all thoſe warm Debates, which paſs between the afflicted Hero and his cenſorious Friends. This is the grand Reſult of *Elihu*'s calm Reaſoning, and of GOD Almighty's awful Interrogatories. The apparent *Center* this *, in which all the Lines terminate; juſtly therefore to be conſidered, as the *principal* Scope of the whole Work.

I muſt not omit an excellent Obſervation, which I find in ſome *critical and explanatory Notes* †, on the laſt Words of *David*. The judicious Author proving, that this Song relates to *CHRIST*; that it diſplays the Dignity of our REDEEMER, under the Character of *The KING*, and *The juſt ONE*; adds, as an Explication of the laſt amiable and glorious Title---"Our "*LORD JESUS CHRIST* is ſo called not, ſo "much for having fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, in his "own Perſon, and performed an unſinning Obedience "to the Will of GOD, as becauſe by his Righteouſ- "neſs imputed to Us, We alſo upon the Terms ‡ of "the Goſpel, are juſtified, or accounted righteous be- "fore GOD."

I think We may evidently diſcern the ſame Vein of evangelical Doctrine, running through many of the *Pſalms*——*He ſhall convert* § *my Soul*; turn me, not

* See *Job* xlii. 6.

† By Dr. *Grey*. See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1, &c.

‡ That is, *freely*; or, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *without Money and without Price*. For nothing is requiſite, in order to a Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Conviction of our extreme Need, and an unfeigned Deſire to receive them; receive them as Gifts of pure Grace vouchſafed to the *moſt undeſerving* Creatures —This Point, which is ſo intimately connected with our Comfort and Hope, the Reader may ſee more fully ſtated in *Dialogue* XV.

§ *Pſal.* xxiii. 3. I am ſenſible, the Word שׁוֹבֵב may ſignify to *refreſh* or *reſtore*; may anſwer to the *Greek* Phraſe ἀναψύχει; and denote the Comforts of the HOLY GHOST.—This Verb may alſo bear the ſame Signification with the Participle ἐπιστρέψας, in our LORD's Exhortation to *Peter*, *When Thou art converted.*

Not

only from Sin and Ignorance, but from every falſe Confidence, and every deceitful Refuge. *He ſhall bring me forth in Paths of Righteouſneſs*, in thoſe Paths of imputed Righteouſneſs which are always adorned with the Trees of Holineſs; are always watered with the Fountains of Conſolation; and always terminate in everlaſting Reſt.—Some, perhaps, may aſk, Why I give this Senſe to the Paſſage? Why may it not ſignify the Paths of Duty, and the Way of *our own* Obedience?——Becauſe, ſuch Effects are here mentioned, as never have reſulted, and never can reſult, from any Duties of our own. Theſe are not *green Paſtures*, but a parched and blaſted Heath, Theſe are not *ſtill Waters*, but a troubled and diſorderly * Stream. Neither can theſe ſpeak Peace, or adminiſter Comfort, when We paſs through the Valley and Shadow of Death. To yield theſe Bleſſings is the exalted Office of *CHRIST*, and the ſole Prerogative of his Obedience.

Admitting, that this Obedience is of ſovereign Advantage, during the Years of Life, and in the Hour of Death; it may ſtill occur to the ſerious and inquiſitive Mind, what will be our Safeguard, after the great

Not deſcribing the firſt grand Revolution in the Heart, by which a new Determination is given to the Judgment, and a new Bias, to the Affections; but expreſſing thoſe ſubſequent Operations of the Divine SPIRIT, by which We are recovered from our various Relapſes, and healed of our daily Infirmities. And I queſtion, whether there is any Inſtance, in which we more frequently need theſe reſtoring Aids, than in the Caſe of adhering to our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. So prone are We to *forget our Reſting-place!* So liable to fall from our Steadfaſtneſs in *CHRIST?*

* *Blaſted, diſorderly*—Let not theſe Words grate on the Ear; or, if they grate on the Ear, let them humble the Heart. What were *Job*'s Duties? Zealous and exemplary; practiſed from his very Youth; and neither excelled nor equalled by any Perſon on Earth. Yet theſe, in Point of Juſtification, were not a whit better than *Aſpaſio* repreſents. Let Us hear the laſt Words of this matchleſs Saint, *I abhor myſelf, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes.* From this Confeſſion we learn, that, with all his Furniture of *perſonal* Obedience, He had juſt enough to be aſhamed, confounded, undone.

great Change? When the Soul departs, and our Place on Earth knows Us no more: when the Body revives, and We ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-Seat: what will *then* avail Us?——The ſame Righteouſneſs of our Divine LORD. This, if I miſtake not, is diſplayed in the very next Pſalm. Which begins with a ſolicitous Inquiry; ſubjoins a ſatisfactory Anſwer; and cloſes with a moſt pertinent but rapturous Apoſtrophe.—This is the Inquiry; *Who ſhall aſcend into the Hill of the LORD? Or who ſhall riſe up in his holy Place?*——This is the Anſwer: *Even He that hath clean Hands and a pure Heart* *. *He ſhall receive* † *the Bleſſings* of plenary Remiſſion *from the LORD, and Righteouſneſs alſo from the GOD of his Salvation:* even that perfect Righteouſneſs, which is not acquired by Man, but beſtowed by JEHOVAH: which is not performed by the Saint, but received by the Sinner: which is the only ſolid Baſis, to ſupport our Hopes of Happineſs; the only valid Plea, for an Admiſſion into the Manſions of Joy.—Then follows the Apoſtrophe. The Prophet foreſees the Aſcenſion of *CHRIST* and his Saints into the Kingdom of Heaven. He ſees his LORD, marching at the Head of the redeemed World, and conducting them into Regions of Honour and Joy. Suitably to ſuch a View, and in a moſt beautiful Strain of Poetry, He addreſſes Himſelf to the heavenly Portals: *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting Doors; and the King of Glory,* with all the Heirs of his Grace and Righteouſneſs, *ſhall* make their triumphant Entry; *ſhall enter in,* and go out no more.

Having ſhewn the powerful and extenſive Influence of our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs; its

* *Pſal.* xxiv. 4. *Who* hath clean Hands and a pure Heart? He only, whoſe *Heart is ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience,* by the precious Blood of *CHRIST*; and who *lives by Faith in the SON of GOD.* Heb. x. 22. Gal. ii. 20.

† The Words of the Apoſtle, ο λαμβανων την δωρεαν της δικαιοσυνης are almoſt a literal Tranſlation, are the very beſt Explanation, of the Pſalmiſt's Language, ישא צדקה *Rom.* v. 17. *Pſal.* xxiv. 5.

Efficacy, in this World to juſtify, in the other World to glorify; well may the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael* profeſs his ſupreme Value for it, and intire Dependence on it. *I will go forth in the Strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs only* *. As though He had ſaid; I will have recourſe to no other Righteouſneſs, for the Conſolation of my Soul. I will plead no other Righteouſneſs, for the Recommendation of my Perſon. I will fly to no other Righteouſneſs, for my final Acceptance, and endleſs Felicity.——This is that *Raiment of Needle-work and Clothing of wrought Gold* †, in which the King's Daughter is introduced to HIM, "who ſitteth in the Heavens over all." This is that Garment *for Glory and for Beauty* ‡, which clothed our great HIGH-PRIEST; and, deſcending to his very Feet §, clothes and adorns the loweſt Members of his myſtical Body.

Recollecting all the foregoing Particulars, juſtly and on the moſt rational Ground, does our royal Author declare; *Bleſſed are the People, that know the joyful Sound: they ſhall walk, O LORD, in the Light of thy Countenance. In thy Name ſhall they rejoice all the Day: and in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted* ‖. ——They are truly bleſſed, they alone are happy, who *know the joyful Sound* of the Goſpel; not only receive it with their Ears, but admit it into their very Hearts; ſo as to partake of the ſacred Peace, and ſpiritual Liberty, which it proclaims ——*They ſhall walk in the Light of thy Countenance*; they ſhall enjoy ſuch Communications of thy Grace, and ſuch Manifeſtations of thy Love, as will conſtitute the Serenity and Sunſhine of their Souls.—*In thy Name O LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in thy glorious Perſon, and thy infinite

* Pſal. lxxi. 16. There is in the *Hebrew* Original, and in the new Tranſlation, a very emphatical Repetition; which adds Weight to the Sentiment, and demands a peculiar Attention from the Reader: *Thy Righteouſneſs, even thine only.*

† Pſal. lxv. 13.

‡ *Exod.* xxviii. 31. *Notabat*, ſays WITSIUS upon the Place, *illud Pallium Juſtitiæ, quo indutus eſt, & ſues induit CHRISTUS.*

§ Rev. i. 13. ‖ Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16

infinite Merits, *ſhall they rejoice.* And not occaſionally, but habitually; not barely at ſome diſtinguiſhed Intervals, but *all the Day.* Their Joy ſhall be as laſting, as it is ſubſtantial. — *And in thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted*; ſet above the tantalizing Power of temporal Things; placed beyond the ſlaviſh Fear of the laſt Enemy; and raiſed, when Time ſhall be no more, to a State of celeſtial Glory, and conſummate Bliſs.

How thoroughly *evangelical* is this ſeraphic Writer! He has Joy, He has Bleſſedneſs, and He looks for everlaſting Exaltation. Yet not from his Faith, his Repentance, and his own ſincere Obedience. According to this, which is the modern Scheme, Faith, inſtead of receiving would *ſupplant* the *LORD JESUS:* Repentance, inſtead of being the Gift of *CHRIST*, would become his *Rival:* and ſincere Obedience, which is for the Praiſe and Glory of GOD, would *eclipſe* and *impoveriſh* his Grace.—— But *David* adopts no ſuch Sentiments. *David* maintains no ſuch Doctrine. This is the invariable Language of his Heart, *All my Springs* of Hope, of Truſt, and Conſolation, O thou adored IMMANUEL, *are in Thee* *.

This Senſe is the leſs precarious, I had almoſt ſaid the moſt certain, as it exactly correſponds with the Analogy of Faith, and coincides with the expreſs Declarations of other Scriptures. — *Iſaiah* is ſtyled the *Evangeliſt* of the *Jewiſh* Church. Becauſe, more frequently than any of the Prophets he celebrates, and more copiouſly explains this and other Peculiarities of the Goſpel.—In the very firſt Chapter, He preaches theſe glad Tidings; *Sion ſhall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteouſneſs. Sion*, the Goſpel Church, compoſed of fallen Creatures, ſometime diſobedient to their GOD, and inſlaved to Satan, ſhall be *redeemed.* Redeemed, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but by ſevere *Judgments* executed on their glorious HEAD, and gracious REPRESENTATIVE. And not by

* Pſal. lxxxvii. 7.

theſe only, but by *Righteouſneſs* alſo; by the perfect and moſt meritorious Righteouſneſs of the ſame divinely excellent PERSON *.

Our ſacred Author bears his Teſtimony, with warmer Zeal and brighter Evidence, as he proceeds in his incomparable Diſcourſes. *Surely, ſhall one ſay* (or, as it may be rendered, *only*) *in the LORD have I Righteouſneſs and Strength.* †. Pleaſe to obſerve, *Theron*; it is not ſaid, in my own Works, in my own Repentance, no, nor in my own Faith, but *in the LORD JESUS* have I Righteouſneſs.—Righteouſneſs for Juſtification, and Strength, for Sanctification. An imputed Righteouſneſs, to procure my Acceptance; an imparted Strength, to produce my Holineſs. The firſt, conſtituting my Title to the everlaſting Inheritance; the laſt, forming my perſonal Preparation for its Enjoyment. — *Surely*, which expreſſes a firm Perſuaſion, and an unſhaken Affiance, *Only*, which denotes an utter Renunciation of all other Confidence, and excludes every other Ground of Hope—*Righteouſneſſes* ‡, the Original is in the plural Number. Which ſeems to be uſed, not without an important Deſign; to inlarge the Significancy of the Word, and make it correſpond with the Richneſs of the Bleſſing. So that it may imply the Fulneſs and ſupereminent Excellency of this Gift of Grace; as comprehending whatever §, either of ſuffering or of Obedience, is requiſite to the Juſtification of Sinners.—Inſomuch, that *in the LORD JESUS CHRIST*,

* *Hanc Redemptionem docet* SPIRITUS SANCTUS *habere Nos in Obedientiâ & Sanguine JESU CHRISTI.* Iſai. i. 27. VITRING. in Loc.

† Iſai. xlv. 24.

‡ צדקות parallel to which, both in Conſtruction and Signification, is the Phraſe uſed by St. *John* Δικαιωματα, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine Linen is the Righteouſneſs* (properly, the Righteouſneſſes) *of the Saints.*

§ *Vult dicere Propheta in JEHOVAH eſſe* ID PROPTER QUOD *Peccator reſpiciens & credens*, a Peccatis abſolvi, & jure ad Benedictionem cœleſtem donari *queat ac debeat: eſſe illud JEHOVÆ proprium: ab ipſo quærendum; quod extra ipſum non invenitur.* VITRING.

CHRIST, and his all-perfect Righteouſneſs, *the Seed of Iſrael ſhall* not only *be juſtified*, but rejoice; *and* not only confide, but *glory* *.

What he had juſt now aſſerted, he exemplifies in his own, and in the Perſon of every true Believer. *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my Soul ſhall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteouſneſs* †.—True Believers are compared, in one of our ſacred Eclogues, to a *Company of Horſes in Pharaoh's Chariot* ‡: to *Horſes*, than which no Animal is more ſtately and graceful: to *Egyptian* Horſes, which were the beſt and compleateſt, then in the World: to thoſe in *Pharaoh's Chariot*, which, doubtleſs, were a choice Set; ſelected from Thouſands; and fineſt, where all were fine. Here, methinks, I ſee the Compariſon realized. *Chriſtians*, endued with ſuch a Spirit, as breathes in this animated Text, are like a Collection of thoſe gallant and majeſtic Steeds; not deſtined to low Drudgery, but appointed to run in the royal Chariot; all Life; full of Fire; champing the Bit, and eager for the Chaſe. Nothing can more beautifully deſcribe a State of Exultation and Ardour, than the preceding Similitude, or the following Words—*I will rejoice*; *I will greatly rejoice*; *my* very *Soul*, and all that is within me, *ſhall be joyful in my GOD*. Wherefore? Becauſe He *has clothed me*, undone Sinner as I am, *with the Garments of Salvation*: Becauſe *He hath covered me*, defective as all my Services are, with the *Robe of Righteouſneſs*. A Robe, which hides every Sin, that in Thought, Word, or Deed, I have committed. A Robe, which ſcreens from the Sword of Juſtice, the Curſe of the Law, and all the Vengeance my Iniquities have deſerved. A Robe, which adorns and dignifies my Soul; renders it fairer than the Moon, clear as the Sun, and meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light.

Having repreſented this Righteouſneſs, in a Variety of grand and charming Views—the Prophet farther characterizes it, as the *unalterable* and *never-failing*

* Iſai. xlv. 25. † Iſai. lxi. 10. ‡ Cant. i. 9.

Origin of our Juſtification and Happineſs. This he diſplays by a Train of Images, bold and ſublime to the laſt Degree. *Lift up your Eyes to the Heavens, and look upon the Earth beneath: for the Heavens ſhall vaniſh away like Smoke, and the Earth ſhall wax old like a Garment; but my Salvation ſhall be for ever, and my Righteouſneſs ſhall not be aboliſhed* *. — Obſerve the vaſt Dimenſions, and the firm Foundations, both of the upper and the lower World. How ſtrong, how ſtedfaſt, they all appear! Yet theſe, indiſſoluble as they may ſeem, ſhall periſh.——This majeſtic *Globe*, on which Mountains riſe and Oceans roll, ſhall loſe its beautiful Gloſs; and be laid aſide, like a decayed uſeleſs Garment. Even that more majeſtic *Concave*, in which Stars are fixed, and Planets revolve, ſhall be deprived of its very ſuperior Luſtre; and vaniſh away, like the diſſolving Smoke. Whereas, *my Salvation*, with all the ſpiritual and heavenly Bleſſings included in it, ſhall ſubſiſt and flouriſh for ever. *And my Righteouſneſs*, which is the meritorious Cauſe of all, ſhall be an immoveable Foundation for Repoſe and Happineſs —In ſhort; whether there be moral Virtues, they ſhall be found wanting; whether there be chriſtian Graces, they ſhall prove ineffectual; But my Conformity to the Law, and my Obedience unto Death, neither need Addition, nor admit of Change; they are *all-ſufficient* in their Merit, and in their Virtue *everlaſting*

When *Day* ariſes on our benighted Hemiſphere, it breaks and ſpreads by a gradual Increaſe. Forming, firſt, the grey Twilight; next, the bluſhing Morn; then, the ſhining Light; till all is heightened into the Blaze and Glow of Noon — When *Spring* reviſits our wintry Clime, She alſo advances by gentle Degrees. Firſt, ſwells the Bud, and protrudes the Gem; then, expands the Leaf, and unfolds the Bloſſom: the Face of Things is continually changing for the better; and Nature ſhews herſelf, almoſt every Hour, in ſome new and more engaging Dreſs.—This leiſurely Proceſs,

* Iſai. li. 6

ceſs, renders the *ſtrong* Effulgence of the celeſtial Orb more ſupportable; and the *lovely* Expanſions of the vegetable Creation, more obſervable.

So progreſſive and increaſing are the Diſplays of *JESUS CHRIST*, exhibited in the Scriptures. Whoſe Appearance is unſpeakably *more delightful* to the Soul, than the Emanations of orient Light are to the Eye, or the Entertainments of the vernal Seaſon to our other Senſes.—The Gloom of fallen *Adam* was alleviated by a Ray from this SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS——*Abraham* and the Patriarchs ſaw afar off the Bleſſed *JESUS*, *as the Morning ſpread upon the Mountains* *.——The *Pſalmiſt* and the Prophets, beheld his nearer Approaches, like the Sun upon the Point of Riſing.—To the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts He aroſe, in perfect Luſtre, and complete Beauty The Grace and the Privileges, which *dawned* under other Diſpenſations of Religion, are *brought* even to meridian *Light* by the Goſpel.—This I mention, juſt to intimate what You may expect from a following Letter.

In the mean Time, let Us attend to the Prophet *Daniel*. He records a Meſſage from Heaven, which is more clearly deſcriptive of this great evangelical Bleſſing, than all the foregoing Texts. He had been under much Diſtreſs, and in great Perplexity: afflicted for his own, and his Countrymens Sins; anxious for the Welfare of the choſen Nation, and the Proſperity of true Religion. When an Angel was diſpatched to the holy Mourner, with this moſt chearing News; which, received by Faith, is the richeſt Balm to a wounded Conſcience and the only Remedy for a guilty World: *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City; to finiſh the Tranſgreſſion, and make an End of Sin; to make Reconciliation for Iniquity; and to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs* †. ——This Prophecy relates to the MESSIAH. It foretells, that, in the Fulneſs of Time, He ſhould *finiſh the Tranſgreſſion* ‡; reſtrain and ſuppreſs the

* Joel ii. 2. † Dan. ix. 24. ‡ כלא

Power of Corruption; by purifying to Himſelf a peculiar People—Should *make an End of Sin* *; by ſealing up or ſecreting its Guilt, and totally aboliſhing its condemning Power—Should *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*;——by ſuſtaining the Vengeance due to Sinners, and fully ſatisfying the divine Juſtice for all their Offences—Should not barely publiſh, but accompliſh and *bring in a Righteouſneſs* †; that it may be preſented both to GOD and Man; to GOD, for the Reparation of his violated Law; to Man, for the Juſtification of his obnoxious Perſon—That this Righteouſneſs ſhould be *everlaſting*; not ſuch as may be compared to the Morning Cloud, which paſſeth away; or to the early Dew, which is ſoon dried up; but ſuch as will out-laſt the Hills, on which the latter ſhines; and out-laſt the Skies, through which the former ſails. A Righteouſneſs, whoſe Merits extend to every Period and every Action of our Lives; and when once made ours by Imputation, remains and will remain our unalienable Property. — To this all the Saints who, in antient Generations, pleaſed GOD, owe their Acceptance; on this, all the Children of Men, who, in future Ages, hope for his Mercy, muſt rely; by this the whole Aſſembly of the Bleſſed, will be invariably and eternally precious in his Sight —Exalted Character! Can it be applicable to any Thing leſs, than the Righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD? Surely, None can imagine, that *Daniel* would ſpeak in ſuch a *magnificent* Strain of any *human* Righteouſneſs; ſince, in this very Chapter, he profeſſedly depreciates Himſelf, his Fellow-ſaints, and all human Performances whatever.

I forgot,

* חתם

† להביא I think, muſt ſignify more than to *publiſh* or *preach*. Had this been all that the Angel was commiſſioned to declare, לבשר or להגיד would probably have been uſed—The Word implies ſuch *a bringing in* (the Original is the ſame) as when *Abel* brought his Sacrifice to the Altar, for the divine Acceptance; and *Eſau* brought his Veniſon into the Chamber, for his Father's Uſe. *Gen.* iv. 4. xxvii. 31.

I forgot, in the proper Place to conſult the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Let Us now refer Ourſelves to his Determination. Celebrating the SAVIOUR of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, He ſays; *This is his Name, whereby He ſhall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* A Determination, ſo clear and ſatisfactory, as not to leave, One would almoſt conclude, any Room for Appeal—Should the Senſe of the Paſſage be queſtioned, I think, there cannot be a more authentic Explication, than the preceding Extracts from *Iſaiah* and *Daniel*. And having the unanimous Atteſtation of two inſpired Penmen, We may venture to abide by ſuch Authority, even in Oppoſition to ſome reſpectable Names.——In the Verſe immediately foregoing, the *eſſential* Holineſs of the REDEEMER is diſplayed, under the Character of the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH—The Sanctity, which He will *impart* to his Subjects, is intimated by his *executing Judgment and Juſtice in the Earth.*—In the Clauſe, We have quoted, his *imputed* Righteouſneſs is foretold and promiſed—Thus the ſeveral Sentences are diſtinct; the Deſcription of the SAVIOUR is complete; and he appears perfectly ſuited to the Exigencies of a wretched World; in their worſt Eſtate, inſlaved to Satan, and in their beſt, falling ſhort of the Glory of GOD—This therefore I take to be the grand and extenſive Meaning of the Prophet; not barely, The righteous LORD: not barely, the LORD who infuſes Righteouſneſs into ſinful Souls; but the incarnate JEHOVAH *, whoſe *mediatorial* Righteouſneſs is, by an Act of gracious Imputation, *ours*—to all the Intents of Juſtification and Salvation, ours—as much ours for theſe bleſſed Purpoſes, as

* *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. In theſe golden, infinitely better than golden Verſes, are characterized the divine and the human Natures of *CHRIST*, together with his mediatorial Office. The *divine* Nature; in that He enjoys the Honours of the GODHEAD, and poſſeſſes the incommunicable Name JEHOVAH.—The *human* Nature; in that He was to be *raiſed up unto David*, and ſpring as a Branch from his Root.—The *mediatorial* Office; in that He is the *Righteouſneſs* of his People, and the *Salvation* of Sinners.

as if We had wrought it out, each in his own Perſon *.

Forſeeing and contemplating theſe Bleſſings, the inraptured *Zechariah* cries out; *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion; ſhout, O Daughter of Jeruſalem; behold, thy King cometh unto Thee: He is juſt, and having Salvation, lowly and riding upon an Aſs, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Aſs* †.—He addreſſes himſelf to *Sion* and *Jeruſalem*, to the eccleſiaſtical and civil Community. Perſons of all Ranks and of every Character, are exhorted to *rejoice*; to rejoice *greatly*; nay, to expreſs the Joy of their Heart, by loud *Hallelujahs*, and triumphant *Exclamations*—What is the Cauſe of this general Delight? What can fill both Church and State with ſuch high Satisfaction? *Thy King cometh unto Thee*; even that glorious KING, who rules in Heaven, and rules in the Heart; whoſe Service is Freedom, and whoſe Laws are Love——*He is juſt*; divinely righteous in his Nature, and He cometh to fulfil all Righteouſneſs in thy Stead. *Having Salvation*; hereby procuring Salvation for his People; Deliverance from Sin, from Death, and Hell; from every Evil Thou deſerveſt, and from every Miſery Thou feareſt.—That none may be diſcouraged, and none deterred, from applying to this Prince of Peace, He is, amidſt all the Honours of his Sovereignty, *lowly*: does not abhor the Baſeſt, will not deſpiſe the Meaneſt, to the Poor his Goſpel is preached, and for the Guilty his Benefits are intended.—As an Emblem, as a Proof, of this moſt amiable and condeſcending Goodneſs, *He will ride*; not like the Conquerors of old, in a triumphal Chariot, or on a richly capariſoned Steed; but upon the moſt mean and deſpicable of all Animals;

* *Witſius*, ſpeaking of the *mediatorial* Righteouſneſs, has written in *Latin*, what *Aſpaſio* expreſſes in *Engliſh*; *Per illam Obedientiam tota Mult tudo illorum, qui ad ipſum pertinent*, juſti conſtituuntur; *id eſt, cenſentur Jus habere ad æternam Vitam, non minus quam ſi quilibet eorum in propria Perſona illam Obedientiam præſtiſſet.* Lib. II. Cap. v.

† Zech. ix. 9.

mals, *An Ass:* nay, what is still more despicable, on a rude undisciplined *Colt*, *the* wayward *Foal of an Ass* *.

And now—since my *Theron* confesses Himself to be *miserable, and poor, and naked:* since the Eyes of his

* Because some profane Scoffers have presumed to ridicule this very remarkable Incident of our LORD's Life, some Interpreters of Note have endeavoured to rescue it from their *abusive* Attempts, by observing—"That the *Eastern* Asses are much larger and "more graceful than ours. That Patriarchs and Judges thought "it no Disgrace to ride upon them."

This Observation has, I fear, more of *false Delicacy*, than of real Truth, or christian Simplicity. In the *Patriarchal* Ages, I acknowledge, Persons of High Distinction thought it no Dishonour, in their Journies and Processions, to appear on this Animal. But I very much question, whether the same Passion subsisted, or the same Way of Thinking prevailed, in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*. See *Jam.* iii. 3.—Nay, I am strongly inclined to suspect, that this plain primitive Custom was superseded, even in the Days of *Zechariah*. For, long before this Time, I find, that *Solomon had four thousand Stalls of Horses for his Chariots, and twelve thousand Horsemen*; and that *Horses were brought to Him out of Egypt and divers other Countries*, 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 28, 29. From this Period, it is probable, none but the poor and inferior Sort of People rode upon Asses.—When *Isaiah* prophesied, *The Land was full of Horses*, Isai. ii. 7. Under the *Persian* Monarchy, when *Zechariah* flourished, Horses were in still greater Repute. Well therefore might the Prophet say, with Wonder and Delight—*lowly and riding upon an Ass!*

Was it a mean Attitude? *Exceedingly* mean? Mean even to *Contempt?* I make no scruple to grant it: nay, I make my Boast of it! It is for the Honour of my LORD's Condescension: it is for the utter Confusion of all worldly Pomp and Grandeur: and it is for the unspeakable Comfort of my sinful Soul.—Most charming Humility! Most indearing Gentleness! HE, *who rideth upon the Heavens as it were upon an Horse, and maketh the Clouds his Chariot*, to atone for my Pride, and to encourage my Hope, disdained not, in the Days of his Flesh, to ride upon an Ass.

They, who would *dignify* this Action, any otherwise than from its ever to-be-admired Abasement, seem to have forgotten the Stable and the Manger. They, who are *offended* at this Circumstance, and ashamed to own their LORD in his deep Humiliation, have but very imperfectly learned the Apostle's Lesson; *GOD forbid, that I should glory, save in the Cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD.*

his Understanding are inlightened, to see the Impurity of his Heart; the Imperfection of his Righteousness; and that He is, in Himself, a lost undone Sinner—— what Advice, chearing and salutary, shall I suggest? O! let Him listen to an ADVISER, infinitely more able and compassionate. Listen to HIM, who is the ANTIENT OF DAYS, and the WISDOM OF GOD; *I counsel Thee*, says the Blessed *JESUS, to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that Thou mayest be rich; and white Raiment, that Thou mayest be clothed* *. —*Gold!* What can this denote, but all those spiritual Treasures, which are hid in *CHRIST?* Which are, in Measure, unsearchable; in Value, inestimable; in Duration, eternal —*White Raiment!* Surely this must signify the Righteousness of our REDEEMER; which is all Purity, and all Perfection. Which clothes the Soul, as a most suitable, and commodious Garment; which covers every Deformity and every Sin; and presents the Believer free from Shame, and free from Blemish, before the Throne of the MAJESTY in the Heavens.

This, to use the delicate Language, and amiable Images of *Isaiah*—*This* Doctrine, embraced by a realizing Faith, *is the only* Pillow of *Rest wherewith Ye may cause the weary* and heavy-laden Soul to *find Repose*; *and this is the* sovereign Cordial, prepared by infinite Mercy, for the *Refreshment* of anxious and desponding Transgressors. O! Let Us not be in the Number of those proud *and* refractory Creatures, who, though they infinitely needed, yet *would not hear* † the gracious News, nor receive the unspeakable Benefit.—In this Respect, and in this most eminently, is that other Saying of the same sublime Teacher, true; *The LORD of Hosts shall be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty, to the Residue of his People* ‡. Shall we tear from our Temples, or reject with Disdain, this unfading and heavenly Ornament; in order to substitute a mean and tawdry Chaplet of our own?

Let

* Rev. iii, 18. † Isai. xxviii. 12. ‡ Isai. xxviii. 5.

Let me add a pertinent Paſſage from one of our celebrated dramatic Writers. Which if proper in *his* Senſe, will be incomparably more ſo, according to *our* Manner of Application.

——————— *It were contemning,*
With impious ſelf-ſufficient Arrogance,
This Bounty of our GOD, not to accept,
With every Mark of Honour, ſuch a Gift.

I might proceed to urge this Expoſtulation of the Poet, as I might eaſily have multiplied my Quotations from holy Writ. But, ſtudious of Brevity, I leave both, without farther Inlargement, to your own Meditation. Yet, more ſtudious of my Friend's Happineſs, I cannot conclude without wiſhing Him an Intereſt, a clear and eſtabliſhed Intereſt, in this everlaſting Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. For ſo, and ſo only, can He have *everlaſting Conſolation and good Hope through Grace.*—I am, my dear *Theron*,

Inviolably Yours,

ASPASIO.

P. S. Oppoſite to the Room in which I write, is a moſt agreeable Proſpect of the Gardens and the Fields. *Theſe*, covered with Herbage, and loaded with Corn: *thoſe* adorned with Flowers, and abounding with Eſculents. All appearing with ſo florid and ſo beautiful an Aſpect, that they really ſeem in Conformity to the *Pſalmiſt*'s Deſcription, even to *laugh and ſing.*—Let me juſt obſerve, That all theſe fine Scenes, all theſe rich Productions ſprung — from what? From the *Diſſolution* of the reſpective Seeds. The Seeds planted by the Gardener, and the Grain ſowed by the Huſbandman, firſt periſhed in the Ground, and then the copious Increaſe aroſe.

Much

Much in the ſame Manner, a true Faith in *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs ariſes —— from what? From the *Ruins* of Self-ſufficiency, and the *Death* of perſonal Excellency. Let me therefore intreat my *Theron*, ſtill to take the Diary for his Counſellor; ſtill to keep an Eye on the Depravity of his Nature, and the Miſcarriages of his Life. The more clearly We ſee, the more deeply We feel, our Guilt and our Miſery, the more highly ſhall We value the Obedience of our bleſſed SURETY.—In ſuch a Heart, Faith will flouriſh as a Roſe, and lift up its Head like a Cedar in Lebanon. To ſuch a Soul, the great REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs will be welcome, as Waters to the thirſty Soil, or as Rivers in the ſandy Deſart.

LETTER V.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

GIVE me leave to relate an uncommon Accident; which happened a little while ago, in this Neighbourhood; and of which I myſelf was a Spectator. —The Day was the Sabbath; the Place appropriated to divine Worſhip, was the Scene of this *remarkable* Affair

A Boy came running into the Church, breathleſs and trembling He told, but in a low Voice, thoſe who ſtood near, that a Preſs-gang * was advancing, to

* The Reader, it is hoped, will excuſe whatever may appear *low*, or favour of the *Plebeian*, in any of theſe Circumſtances. If *Aſpaſio* had ſet Himſelf to *invent* the Deſcription of a Pannic, He would probably have formed it upon ſome more raiſed and dignified Incident. But as this was a real *Matter of Fact*, which lately happened in one of our Sea Port Towns; Truth, even in a plain Dreſs,

to beſiege the Doors, and arreſt the Sailors. --- *An Alarm* was immediately taken. The Seamen, with much Hurry, and no ſmall Anxiety, began to ſhift for themſelves. The reſt of the Congregation, perceiving an unuſual Stir, were ſtruck with Surprize. --- A Whiſper of Inquiry ran from Seat to Seat; which increaſed by Degrees, into a confuſed Murmur. No One could inform his Neighbour; therefore, every One was left to ſolve the Appearance, from the Suggeſtions of a *timorous Imagination*. Some ſuſpected, the Town was on fire. Some were apprehenſive of an Invaſion from the *Spaniards*. Others looked up, and looked round, to ſee if the Walls were not giving way, and the Roof falling upon their Heads.——In a few Moments, the Conſternation became general. The Men ſtood like Statues, in ſilent Amazement, and unavailing Perplexity. The Women ſhrieked aloud; fell into Fits; ſunk to the Ground in a Swoon. Nothing was ſeen, but *wild Diſorder*; nothing heard but *tumultuous Clamour*.--Drowned was the Preacher's Voice. Had He ſpoke in Thunder, his Meſſage would ſcarce have been regarded. To have gone on with his Work, amidſt ſuch a prodigious Ferment, had been like arguing with a Whirlwind, or talking to a Tempeſt.

This brought to my Mind that great *tremendous Day*, when the Heavens will paſs away; when the Earth will be diſſolved; and all its Inhabitants receive their final Doom.-- If, at ſuch incidents of very inferior Dread, our Hearts are ready to fail; what unknown and inconceivable Aſtoniſhment muſt ſeize the guilty Conſcience, when the Hand of the ALMIGHTY ſhall open thoſe unparallelled Scenes of Wonder, Deſolation, and Horror! —— When the Trumpet ſhall ſound---The Dead ariſe---The World be in Flames--- The JUDGE on the Throne---and all Mankind at the Bar!

The

Dreſs, may poſſibly be no leſs acceptable than Fiction, tricked up with the moſt ſplendid Embelliſhments.

The Trumpet ſhall ſound †, ſays the prophetic Teacher. And how ſtartling, how ſtupendous the Summons! Nothing equal to it, nothing like it, was ever heard through all the Regions of the Univerſe, or all the Revolutions of Time. — When conflicting Armies have diſcharged the bellowing Artillery of War, or when victorious Armies have ſhouted for Joy of the Conqueſt, the Seas and Shores have rung, the Mountains and Plains have echoed. But the Shout of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD, will reſound from Pole to Pole Will pierce the Center, and ſhake the Pillars of Heaven.——Stronger, ſtranger ſtill! It will penetrate even the deepeſt Receſſes of the Tomb. It will pour its amazing Thunder into all thoſe Abodes of Silence. The Dead, the very Dead, ſhall hear.

When the Trumpet has ſounded, *the Dead ſhall ariſe*.—In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, the Graves open; the monumental Piles are cleft aſunder; and the Nations under-ground ſtart into Day. What an immenſe Harveſt of Men and Women, ſpringing up from the Caverns of the Earth, and the Depths of the Sea! Stand a-while my Soul, and conſider the wonderful Spectacle.—*Adam* formed in Paradiſe, and the Babe born but Yeſterday, the earlieſt Ages, and lateſt Generations, meet upon the ſame Level. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, People of all Climes and Languages, unite in the promiſcuous Throng. Here, thoſe vaſt Armies, which, like Swarms of Locuſts, covered Countries; which, with an irreſiſtible Sweep, over-ran Empires; here they all appear, and here they all are loſt Loſt, like the ſmall Drop of a Bucket, when plunged into the unfathomable and boundleſs Ocean —O! the Multitudes! The Multitudes! which theſe Eyes ſhall ſurvey, when GOD *calleth the Heavens from above, and the Earth that He may judge his People*. What Shame muſt fluſh the guilty Cheek! What Anguiſh wound the polluted Breaſt! To have all their filthy Practiſes, and infamous Tempers, expoſed before this innumerable

† 1 Cor. xv. 52.

innumerable Croud of Witneſſes!—Fly, my *Theron*; and fly, my Soul; inſtantly let Us fly, earneſtly let Us fly, to the purifying Blood of *JESUS*. That all our Sins may be blotted out; that We may be found *unblameable* and *unreproveable*, in the Preſence of the aſſembled World; and, what is infinitely more to be revered, in the Sight of the omnipotent GOD.

When the Swarm iſſues, the Hive will *burn*. There is no more Need of this habitable Globe. The Elect have fought the good Fight, and finiſhed their Courſe. The Wicked have been tried, and found incorrigible. The important Drama is ended: every Actor has performed his Part: now therefore the Scenes are taken down, and the Stage is demoliſhed. —*Woe be to the Earth, and to the Works thereof!* Its Streams are turned into Pitch, its Duſt into Brimſtone; and the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, like a Torrent of Fire, inkindles the Whole. See! ſee! how the Conflagration rages—ſpreads—prevails over all! The Foreſts are in a Blaze, and the Mountains are wrapt in Flame, Cities, Kingdoms, Continents, ſink in the burning Deluge. *London*, *Britain*, *Europe* are no more. Through all the Receptacles of Water, through all the Tracts of Land, through the whole Extent of Air, nothing is diſcernable, but one vaſt, prodigious, fiery Ruin. ——— Where now are the *Treaſures* of the Covetous? Where the *Poſſeſſions* of the Mighty? Where the *Delights* of the Voluptuary?—How wiſe, how happy are they, whoſe Portion is lodged in heavenly Manſions! Their Inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled. Such as the laſt Fire cannot reach, nor the Diſſolution of Nature impair.

But ſee! The azure Vault cleaves. The Expanſe of Heaven is rolled back like a Scroll: and the JUDGE, the JUDGE appears: *He cometh*, cries a mighty Seraph, the Herald of his Approach, *He cometh to judge the World in Righteouſneſs, and miniſter true Judgment unto the People!*——He cometh, not as formerly, in the Habit of a Servant, but clad with uncreated

uncreated Glory, and magnificently attended with the Armies of Heaven. Angels and Archangels ſtand before Him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand of thoſe celeſtial Spirits miniſter unto Him ——Behold Him, ye faithful Followers of the LAMB; and wonder and love. This is HE, who bore all *your* Iniquities on the ignominious Croſs. This is HE, who fulfilled all Righteouſneſs for the Juſtification of *your* Perſons.---Behold Him, ye Deſpiſers of his Grace; and wonder and periſh. This is HE, whoſe merciful Overtures you have contemned, and on whoſe precious Blood You have trampled.

The great *white Throne* *, beyond Deſcription auguſt and formidable, is erected. The KING of Heaven, the LORD of Glory, takes his Seat on the dreadful Tribunal. *Mercy*, on his Right-hand, diſplays the Olive-Branch of Peace, and holds forth the Crown of Righteouſneſs. *Juſtice*, on his Left, poiſes the impartial Scale, and unſheaths the Sword of Vengeance. While *Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*, brighter than ten thouſand Suns, beam in his divine Aſpect.---What are all the preceding Events, to this new Scene of Dignity and Awe? The Peals of Thunder, ſounding in the Archangel's Trumpet; the Blaze of a burning World, and the ſtrong Convulſions of expiring Nature; the unnumbered Myriads of human Creatures, ſtarting into inſtantaneous Exiſtence, and thronging the aſtoniſhed Skies; all theſe ſeem *familiar* Incidents, compared with the Appearance of the incarnate JEHOVAH. --- Amazement, more than Amazement, is all around. Terror and Glory unite in their Extremes. From the Sight of his majeſtic Eye, from the inſupportable Splendors of his Face, the Earth itſelf and the very Heavens *flee away* †—— How then? Oh! how ſhall the Ungodly *ſtand?* Stand in his angry Preſence, and draw near to this conſuming Fire?

Yet draw near they muſt, and take their Tryal---their deciſive Tryal at his righteous Bar. Every Action comes under Examination. For each idle Word

* Rev. xx. 11. † Rev. xx. 11.

Word they muſt give Account. Not ſo much as a ſecret Thought eſcapes this exact Scrutiny.--- How ſhall the Criminals, the impenitent Criminals, either conceal their Guilt, or elude the Sentence? They have to do with a Sagacity, too keen to be deceived; with a Power, too ſtrong to be reſiſted; and (O! terrible, terrible Conſideration!) with a Severity of moſt juſt Diſpleaſure, that will *never* relent, *never* be intreated more.--- What ghaſtly Deſpair lours on their pale Looks! What racking Agonies rend their diſtracted Hearts! The bloody Axe and the torturing Wheel, are Eaſe, are Down, compared with their prodigious Woe. And (O holy GOD! wonderful in thy Doings! fearful in thy Judgments!) even this prodigious Woe is the *gentleſt* of Viſitations, compared with that Indignation and Wrath, which are hanging over their guilty Heads---Which are even now falling on all the Sons of Rebellion---which will plunge them deep in aggravated and endleſs Deſtruction.

And is there a laſt Day? and muſt there come
A ſure, a fix'd, irrevocable Doom?

Surely then, to uſe the Words of a pious Prelate †, it ſhould be "the main Care of our Lives and Deaths, "what ſhall give Us Peace and Acceptation before the "dreadful Tribunal of GOD. What but Righ-"teouſneſs? What Righteouſneſs or whoſe? Ours or "*CHRIST*'s? Ours, in the inherent Graces "wrought in Us, in the holy Works wrought by "Us? Or *CHRIST*'s, in his moſt perfect Obe-"dience and meritorious Satisfaction, wrought for "Us, and applied to Us? The *Popiſh* Faction is for "the former. We Proteſtants are for the latter. "GOD is as direct on our Side, as his Word can make "Him; every where blazoning the Defects of our "own Righteouſneſs, every where extolling the perfect "Obedience of our REDEEMER's."

Behold!

† Biſhop *Hall.*

Behold! says the everlasting KING, *I lay in Sion, for a Foundation, a Stone; a tried Stone; a precious Corner-stone; a sure Foundation:* HE THAT BELIEVETH, SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE †. As this Text contains so noble a Display of our SAVIOUR's consummate Ability for his great Work; as it is admirably calculated, to preserve the Mind from distressing Fears, and to settle it in a steady Tranquillity; You will give me leave to touch it cursorily with my Pen. Just as I should descant upon it in Conversation, was I now sitting in one of your agreeable Arbors, and enjoying your more agreeable Company.

How beautiful the Gradation! How lively the Description! and how very important the practical Improvement! Or, I might say, the Inscription which is engraven on this wonderful Stone.—*Behold!* Intended to rouse and fix our most attentive Regard. The GOD of Heaven speaks. He speaks, and every Syllable is Balm; every Sentence is rich with Consolation. If ever therefore We have Ears to hear, let it be to this SPEAKER, and on this Occasion.

A Stone. Every Thing else is sliding Sand; is yielding Air; is a breaking Bubble. Wealth will prove a vain Shadow; Honour an empty Breath; Pleasure a delusory Dream; our own Righteousness a Spider's Web. If on these We rely, Disappointment must ensue, and Shame be inevitable. Nothing but *CHRIST*, nothing but *CHRIST*, can stably support our spiritual Interests, and realize our Expectations of true Happiness, And, blessed be the divine Goodness! He is, for this Purpose, not a Stone only, but

A tried Stone. Tried, in the Days of his Humanity, by all the Vehemence of Temptations, and all the Weight of Afflictions: yet like Gold From the Furnace, rendered more shining and illustrious by the fiery Scrutiny.—Tried, under the Capacity of a SAVIOUR, by Millions and Millions of depraved, wretched, ruined Creatures; who have always found Him

† Isai. xxviii. 16.

Him *perfectly able*, and as *perfectly willing*, to expiate the moſt enormous Guilt—to deliver from the moſt inveterate Corruptions—and ſave, to the very uttermoſt, all that come unto GOD through Him

A Corner Stone. Which not only ſuſtains, but unites the Edifice: incorporating both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Believers of various Languages, and manifold Denominations—here, in one harmonious Bond of brotherly Love—hereafter in one common Participation of eternal Joy.

A precious Stone. More precious than Rubies; the Pearl of great Price; and the Deſire of all Nations. Precious, with regard to the divine Dignity of his Perſon, and the unequaled Excellency of his mediatorial Offices. In theſe, and in all reſpects, greater than *Jonah*—wiſer than *Solomon*—fairer than the Children of Men—chieſeſt among ten thouſand——and, to the awakened Sinner, or inlightened Believer, *altogether lovely* *.

A Sure Foundation †. Such as no Preſſure can ſhake: equal, more than equal, to every Weight; even to Sin, the heavieſt Load in the World.—*The Rock of Ages*; ſuch as never has failed, never will fail, thoſe humble Penitents, who caſt their Burden upon the LORD REDEEMER; who roll all ‡ their Guilt, and fix.

* Cant. v. 16.

† *Fundamentum fundatiſſimum.*

‡ *Roll.*—this is the exact Senſe of the ſacred Phraſe, יהוה גל אל Pſal. xxii. 8. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xvi. 3. I am not ignorant, that ſome have preſumed to *cenſure*, and many been *ſhy* of uſing this bold and vigorous Metaphor. Which nevertheleſs appears to me, of all others the moſt juſt, the moſt ſignificant, and therefore the moſt truly beautiful.

A Burden, that is manageable and comparatively light, we *caſt*, we *throw*. But that which is extremely ponderous and quite unwieldy, we move only by rolling. Accordingly, Stones of an enormous Size are called by the Oriental Writers, *Stones of Rolling*, Ezra v. 8.—Conſider the Expreſſion in this View, and nothing can repreſent, with greater or with equal Energy, that prodigious Load, which, heavier than the Sand of the Sea, oppreſſes the guilty Conſcience.—By ſubſtituting any other Word, we infeeble and dilute the Senſe: We loſe the capital and ſtriking Idea.

Vain

fix their whole Hopes, on this immoveable Baſis —— Or, as the Words *may* be rendered, *A Foundation* *! *A Foundation!* There is a fine Spirit of Vehemency in the Sentence, thus underſtood. It ſpeaks the Language of Exultation, and expreſſes an important Diſcovery. That which Mankind infinitely want; that which Multitudes ſeek, and find not; it is here! it is here! This, this is the Foundation for their Pardon, their Peace, their eternal Felicity.

Whoſoever believeth, though preſſed with Adverſities, or ſurrounded by Dangers, *ſhall not make haſte* †. But, free from tumultuous and perplexing Thoughts, preſerved from raſh and precipitate Steps, He ſhall poſſeſs

Vain Man would be wiſe. Let Him not then, for the Credit of his Ingenuity, adventure to correct the Language of Omniſcience. This, if any Thing in Nature, is

Periculoſæ plenum Opus Aleæ.

This will be ſure to diſcover not his fine Taſte, but his *groveling* Apprehenſion, and his *rampant* Pride. To improve, with the Painter's Bruſh, the glowing Colours of the Rainbow; to heighten, by Fuller's Soap, the Luſtre of the new fallen Snows; would be a more modeſt Attempt, and a much eaſier Taſk, than to make an *Index expurgatorius*, or a Table of *Errata*, when the SPIRIT of Inſpiration dictates.

* מוסד לא יחיש This metaphorical Expreſſion though it might be very intelligible to an *Hebrew*, is to an *Engliſh* Reader, like ſome fine Picture placed in a *diſadvantageous* Light. We may poſſibly illuſtrate the Prophet's Meaning, and exemplify his Aſſertion, if we compare the Conduct of *Moſes*, with that of the *Iſraelites*, on viewing the fatal Cataſtrophe of *Dathan* and *Abiram*.—When the Earth trembled under their Feet; when the Ground opened its horrid Jaws; when the preſumptuous Sinners went down alive into the Pit; when the tremendous Chaſm cloſed upon the ſcreaming Wretches; the Children of *Iſrael*, it is written, *fled at the Cry of them.* Fled in wild and haſty Confuſion; *for they ſaid*, *Leſt the Earth ſwallow up Us alſo.*—But *Moſes*, who denounced the dreadful Doom; *Moſes*, who was ſure of the divine Protection; *Moſes* made no ſuch precipitate or diſorderly *Haſte*. He ſtood calm and compoſed: ſaw the whole alarming Tranſaction, without any uneaſy Emotions of Fear, or any unneceſſary Attempts to eſcape. So that *his Behaviour* ſeems to be a clear and appoſite Comment on *Iſaiah*'s *Phraſe*. See *Numb.* xvi.

poſſeſs his Soul in Patience. Knowing the Sufficiency of thoſe Merits, and the Fidelity of that Grace, on which he has repoſed his Confidence, ſhall quietly and without Perturbation wait for an expected End. —— And not only amidſt the perilous or diſaſtrous Changes of Life, but even in the Day of everlaſting Judgment, ſuch Perſons ſhall *ſtand with Boldneſs*. They ſhall look up, to the grand ARBITRATOR — look round, on all the Solemnity of his Appearance —— look forward, to the unalterable Sentence —— and neither feel Anxiety, nor fear Damnation.

Such, in that Day of Terrors, ſhall be ſeen
To face the Thunders with a godlike Mein.
The Planets drop; their Thoughts are fix'd above:
The Center ſhakes; their Hearts diſdain to move.

This Portion of Scripture, which, I hope, will both delight and edify my Friend, recalls our Attention to the Subject of my preſent Letter — to thoſe propitiatory Sufferings, and that juſtifying Righteouſneſs, which, imputed to Sinners, are the Ground of their Comfort, and the Bulwark of their Security. — And what ſay the Writers of the *New Teſtament* upon this Point? They, whoſe Underſtandings were opened by the "WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR," to diſcern the Meaning of the antient Oracles. Who muſt therefore be the moſt competent Judges of their true Import, and our ſureſt Guides in ſettling their Senſe.— Do *they* patronize our Interpretation of the Prophets? Do *they* ſet their Seal to the Authenticity of our Doctrine?

St. *Luke*, in his eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, has preſerved this weighty Declaration of the Apoſtles; *We believe, that through the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, We ſhall be ſaved, even as they**. Here the Thing is implied. — St. *Peter*, in the Introduction to one of his Theological Epiſtles, thus addreſſes his happy Correſpondents: *To them that have obtained*

* Acts xv. 11.

like precious Faith, in the Righteousness † of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Here the Point is expressly asserted. — With equal Clearness is the Doctrine delivered by *Matthew* the Evangelist; *Seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteousness* *. What can the *Kingdom of GOD* mean? An Experience of the Power, and an Enjoyment of the Privileges of the Gospel. What are we to understand by *his Righteousness?* Surely, the Righteousness which is worthy of this grand Appellation, and peculiar to that blessed Institution.

Would we learn, what is the great and distinguishing Peculiarity of the Gospel? St. *Paul* informs Us; *Therein the Righteousness of GOD is revealed, from Faith to Faith.* As this Text leads Us into the Epistle to the *Romans* — as this Epistle is, for the Propriety of its Method, as well as for the Importance of its Doctrine, singularly excellent ——— it may not be amiss, to examine its Structure, and inquire into its Design.

The Apostle writes to a promiscuous People: who had been converted, partly from *Judaism*, partly from *Gentilism*. His Aim is, to strike at the very Root of their former Errors respectively — to turn them *wholly* to the superabundant Grace of GOD, and establish them *solely* on the all-sufficient Merits of *CHRIST*.

The *Gentiles* were, for the most part, grosly ignorant of GOD, and stupidly negligent of invisible Interests. If any among them had a Sense of Religion, their Virtues, they imagined, were meritorious of all that the DEITY could bestow. If they fell into Sin; Sin, they supposed, might easily be obliterated by Repentance; or compensated by a Train of Sacrifices.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. The Phrase is πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη. If we retain the common Translation, it proves another very momentous Truth: that *the Righteousness of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*, is the one *meritorious* procuring Cause of *all* spiritual Blessings; of Faith, as well as of Fruition; of Grace, as well as of Glory.

* Matt. vi. 33.

fices*. A few of their judicious Sages taught, that the moſt probable Means of ſecuring the divine Favour, was a ſincere Reformation of Life.

The *Jews*, it is well known, placed a mighty Dependence on their Affinity to *Abraham*, and the Covenant made with their Fathers; on their Adherence to the Letter of the moral Law, and their ſcrupulous Performances of ceremonial Inſtitutions. —— *Gentiles* and *Jews* agreeing in this Miſtake, that they looked for the Pardon of Guilt, and the Attainment of Happineſs, from ſome Services done, or ſome Qualities acquired by *Themſelves*.

Againſt theſe Errors the zealous Apoſtle draws his Pen. He enters the Liſts like a true Champion of *CHRIST*, in the moſt ſpirited and heroic Manner imaginable. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of CHRIST:* for, however it may be deemed Fooliſhneſs by the polite *Greeks*, or prove a Stumbling-block to the carnal *Jews*, *it is the Power of GOD unto* † *Salvation:* it is the grand Inſtrument, which he has ordained for this bleſſed Purpoſe, and which he will certainly

* See WITSII *Animadverſiones Irenicæ*. Cap. vii.—A choice little Piece of *polemical* Divinity, perhaps the very beſt that is extant. In which the moſt important Controverſies are fairly ſtated, accurately diſcuſſed, and judiciouſly determined; with a Perſpicuity of Senſe, and a Solidity of Reaſoning, exceeded by nothing, but the remarkable Conciſeneſs, and the ſtill more remarkable Candour of the Sentiments.

The *Oeconomia Fœderum*, written by the ſame Hand, is a Body of Divinity; in its Method ſo well digeſted —— in its Doctrines ſo truly evangelical ——— and (what is not very uſual with our ſyſtematic Writers) in its Language ſo refined and elegant —— in its Manner ſo affectionate and animating — that I would venture to recommend it, to every young Student in Divinity: I would not ſcruple to riſk all my Reputation upon the Merits of this Performance: and I cannot but lament it, as one of my greateſt Loſſes, that I was *no ſooner* acquainted with this moſt excellent Author. ——— All whoſe Works, have ſuch a Delicacy of Compoſition, and ſuch a ſweet Savour of Holineſs, that I know not any Compariſon more proper to repreſent their true Character, than *the golden Pot which had Manna*; and was ——— outwardly, *bright* with burniſhed Gold —— inwardly, *rich* with heavenly Food.

† Rom. i. 16.

crown with the desired Success. —— Whence has the Gospel this very peculiar Power? Because, therein a *Righteousness is revealed*; a true and perfect Righteousness, which obliterates all Guilt, and furnishes a solid Title to eternal Life. ——What Righteousness is this? The Righteousness not of Man, but *of* G O D. Which was promised by G O D in the Scriptures; was introduced by G O D in the Person of his S O N; and, on Account of its consummate Excellency, is both acceptable and available in his Sight.

This Righteousness is *from Faith to Faith* *: held forth, as it were, by a promising G O D, and apprehended by a believing Soul. Who, first, gives a firm *Assent* to the Gospel; then, cordially *accepts* its Blessings. From a Conviction that the Doctrine is true, passes to a Persuasion that the Privileges are his own. ——When this is affected, a Foundation is laid for all Happiness; a Principle is wrought, to produce all Holiness.

But why was it requisite, that such a Righteousness should be provided by G O D, and revealed in the Gospel? —— Because, both *Gentile* and *Jew*, neither possessed, nor could attain, any Righteousness of their own: and this Righteousness, though so absolutely necessary for their fallen State, was infinitely remote from all human Apprehensions. The latter Assertion is self-evident. The former is particularly demonstrated. — First, with regard to the *Gentiles*; the Generality of whom, were abandoned to the most scandalous Excesses; and they who had escaped the grosser Pollutions, fell short in the Duties of natural Religion. —— Next, with regard to the *Jews*; many of whom lived in open Violation of the external Commandment; and not One of them acted up to the internal Purity, required by the *Mosaic* Precepts. —— From which Premisses, this Conclusion is deduced; that each of them had transgressed even *their own* Rule of Action; that all of them were, on this Account, utterly inexcusable; therefore *by the Works of the Law*, whether dictated by Reason, or delivered by

* Rom. i. 17.

by *Moſes, no Mortal can be juſtified** in the Sight of GOD.

Leſt any ſhould imagine, that Righteouſneſs may be obtained, if not by a Conformity to the Law of Nature, or the Law of *Moſes*, yet by an Obſervation of *Evangelical* Ordinances, He farther declares; That Sinners are *juſtified freely*, without any Regard to their own Endowments; *through the Redemption*, the complete Redemption, of *JESUS CHRIST*†. After ſuch a Manner, as may lay them low in Humiliation, even while it exalts them to the Kingdom of Heaven. After ſuch a Manner, as may bring Life and Salvation to their Souls, while all the Glory reverts to GOD the FATHER and his SON *JESUS CHRIST*.

In the Proſecution of this very momentous Subject, our ſacred Diſputant removes an Objection, which is as common, as it is plauſible. *Do We make void the Law through Faith?* Do We render it a vain Inſtitution; ſuch as never has been, never will be fulfilled? —— *GOD forbid!* This were a flagrant Diſhonour to the Divine LEGISLATOR and his holy Commandments. Such as we would abhor, rather than countenance. — On the contrary, *We eſtabliſh the Law*‡; not only as We receive it for a *Rule* of Life, but as we expect no Salvation without a proper, without a *perfect* Conformity to its Injunctions. — How can this be effected? By qualifying its Senſe, and ſoftening it into an eaſier Syſtem? This were to *vacate* the

N 3 Law;

* *Rom.* iii. 20. There ſeems to be a Kind of *humbling* or *degrading* Turn in the Apoſtle's Language πασα σαρξ, which may poſſibly be preſerved in the Tranſlation, *No Mortal*.—We may farther obſerve the very nice and exact Manner of the ſacred Argumentation. Leſt it ſhould be ſaid, and from the Authority of St. *James*, *A Man is juſtified by Works*; our unerring Writer tacitly allows, that *before Men* this is practicable, *before Men* this is proper; but not ενωπιον αυτȣ, not *before GOD*.

† Rom. iii. 24.

‡ *Rom.* iii. 31. An inconteſtable Proof, that the Apoſtle treats of the *moral* Law.

Law; to deprive it of its Honours; and hinder it from attaining the due End, either of Obedience or Condemnation.—— No; but We eſtabliſh the Law, by believing in that great MEDIATOR, who has obeyed its every Precept; ſuſtained its whole Penalty; and ſatisfied all its Requirements, in their utmoſt Extent.

Farther to corroborate his Scheme, He proves it from the renowned Examples of *Abraham* and *David*. —— The Inſtance of *Abraham* is ſo clear, that it wants no Comment. Any Paraphraſe would rather obſcure, than illuſtrate it.—The other, deprived from the Teſtimony of the *Pſalmiſt*, may admit the Commentator's Tool. Yet not to hammer it into a new Form, but only to clear away the Rubbiſh; to reſcue it from Miſrepreſentation; and place it in a true Light. *Even as David deſcribeth the Bleſſedneſs of the Man, to whom* GOD *imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying; Bleſſed are They whoſe Unrighteouſneſs is forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered: Bleſſed is the Man, to whom the* LORD *will not impute Sin**.—— Here is *Imputation* aſſerted —— The Imputation of *Righteouſneſs* —— Of Righteouſneſs *without Works*; without any Reſpect to, or any Co-operation from, any Kind of human Works. It is a Bleſſing vouchſafed to the Ungodly; not founded on a Freedom from Sin, but procuring a Remiſſion of its Guilt.

Some, I know, have attempted to reſolve all the Force of this Paſſage, into an Argument for the *Sameneſs* of Pardon and Juſtification. Whereas, the Apoſtle undertakes to prove, not that Forgiveneſs and Juſtification are identically the ſame, but that both are *abſolutely free*. To maintain which Poſition, He argues —— "This Doctrine is as true, as it is com-"fortable. It agrees with the Experience, and has "received the Atteſtation of *David*. When he ſpeaks "of the bleſſed and happy Man, He deſcribes Him, "not as an innocent, but guilty Perſon: not as hav-"ing any Claim to the divine Favour, on account of "deſerving Performances, or recommending Proper-"ties.

* Rom. iv. 6, 7.

" ties. But as owing all his Acceptance to that fove-
" reign Grace, which *forgives Iniquities, and blots out*
" *Sin.* Such is the Caſe with regard to that evange-
" lical Juſtification, which We preach. *Even as*; it
" is, in the *Manner* of its *Vouchſafement*, perfectly
" ſimilar to the Bleſſedneſs celebrated by the *Pſal-*
" *miſt.*" —— The Apoſtle's Eye, is not ſo directly upon the Nature of the Privilege, as upon the *Freeneſs* with which it is granted. Nor can any infer from the Tenour of his Reaſoning, that to be forgiven, is the ſame as to be juſtified; only that both are Acts of infinitely rich Mercy; deſigned for Sinners; promiſed to Sinners; beſtowed on Sinners. Who have nothing, nothing of their own, either to boaſt, or to plead.

In the fifth Chapter, from Verſe the twelfth to the End, the ſacred Penman points out the *Cauſe*, and explains the *Method* of Juſtification. Of which this is the Sum—That *CHRIST*, in purſuance of the Covenant of Grace, fulfilled all Righteouſneſs in the Stead of his People — That this Righteouſneſs, being performed for them, is imputed to them — That, by Virtue of this gracious Imputation, they are abſolved from Guilt, and intitled to Bliſs; as thoroughly abſolved, and as fully intitled, as if in their own Perſons they had undergone the expiatory Sufferings, and yielded the meritorious Obedience. —— Leſt it ſhould ſeem ſtrange, in the Opinion of a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, to hear of being juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of *Another*, the wary Apoſtle urges a parallel Caſe; recorded in the *Jewiſh* Revelation, but ratified by *univerſal* * Experience; namely, our being condemned for the Unrighteouſneſs of another. —— In this Reſpect, He obſerves, *Adam* was a Type of our LORD; or, *a Figure of HIM that was to come* †. The Relations the ſame, but the Effects happily reverſed. *Adam* the Head of his Poſterity; *CHRIST* the

* By the Pains and Death which *Infants*, in every Nation, endure. Which are unqueſtionably Puniſhments, and to which they are doomed by the righteous Judgment of GOD.

† Rom. v. 14.

Head of his People. *Adam*'s Sin was imputed to all his natural Deſcendents; *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs is imputed to all his ſpiritual Offspring. *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion brought Death into the World, and all our Woe; *CHRIST*'s Obedience brings Life and all our Happineſs *. ——— The Whole cloſes with this very obvious and no leſs weighty Inference; *Therefore, as by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even ſo, by the Righteouſneſs of One, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life* †.

I do not recollect any other Similitude, which the Apoſtle ſo minutely ſifts, and ſo copiouſly unfolds. He explains it; He applies it; He reſumes it; He dwells upon it; and ſcarcely knows, how to deſiſt from it. I am ſure, you will not blame me, if I imitate the ſacred Author; revert to the Subject; and quote another Paſſage from the ſame Paragraph. —— *Much more ſhall They, who receive Abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, reign in Life by One, JESUS CHRIST* ‡. — Here, I am ready to think, the inſpired Writer puts a Difference between the two grand Bleſſings purchaſed by IMMANUEL, Remiſſion and Righteouſneſs §. For, who are the Perſons, which *receive Abundance of Grace?* They, I apprehend, that, having ſinned much, have much forgiven. — Who are the Perſons, which *receive Abundance of the Gift of Righteouſneſs?* They, that having in their own Conduct wrought out none, which will bear the Teſt of GOD's impartial Scrutiny, have one placed to their Account, which the all-ſeeing Eye

* *Quemadmodum Peccatum Adami*, ſays *Bengelius*, *ſine Peccatis quæ poſtea commiſimus, Mortem attulit nobis; ſic Juſtitia CHRISTI, ſine bonis Operibus, quæ deinceps a nobis fiunt, Vitam nobis conciliat.* That is; As the Sin of *Adam*, without any Concurrence of the Sins, which We Ourſelves reſpectively commit, occaſioned our Ruin; ſo the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, abſtracted from all Conſideration of our perſonal Obedience, procures our Recovery.

† Rom. v. 18.

‡ Rom. v. 17.

§ *Non tantum Peccata ſublata, ſed Juſtitia præſtita.*

Eye of Heaven approves.—— However, whether the Diſtinction I have ventured to propoſe, be fanciful or ſubſtantial, of this I am perſuaded; that *the Gift* of Righteouſneſs *, muſt ſignify a Righteouſneſs, not originally their own, but Another's; not what they themſelves have acquired, but what was fulfilled by their SURETY; and is, by an Act of heavenly Indulgence, conſigned over to them, Accordingly, it is repreſented, not as a *Work*, but as a *Gift*; and Thoſe who are intereſted in it, are ſtyled not *Workers* but *Receivers*.

I ſhould but faintly copy the apoſtolic Example, if I did not once again avail myſelf of this important Topic. Suffer me, therefore, to tranſcribe one more Verſe from this admirable Chapter. *As by the Diſobedience of One Man, many were made Sinners, ſo by the Obedience of One, ſhall many be made Righteous* † —— The *Diſobedience of One*, is the Diſobedience of *Adam*; his

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* I cannot but wonder at the Aſſertion of a late Writer, who roundly declares, "That there is not one Word in this whole "Chapter, relating to the antecedent Obedience of *CHRIST*'s "Life, but expreſſing only his paſſive Obedience." — Muſt then this Group of Expreſſions—δικαιοσυνη—δικαιωμα—υπακοη —— be confined *barely* to the *Sufferings* of our LORD? To put ſuch a Senſe upon the Words of the Apoſtle, is, according to my Apprehenſion, not to *hear* his Voice, but to *gag* his Mouth; not to acquieſce in the ſacred Oracles, but to make them ſpeak our own Meaning. — *Beza*, who perhaps is inferior to no Critic, with regard to a maſterly Skill in the *Greek* Language, thus explains δικαιωμα; *Juſtificationis eſt Materia, nempe CHRISTI Obedientia; cujus Imputatio nos juſtos facit.* — *Mintert*, in his accurate and copious Lexicon for the *Greek* Teſtament, gives this Interpretation of δικαιοσυνη; *Opera CHRISTO a Patre præſcripta hoc Nomine veniunt; nimirum omnia quæ ab ipſo præſtanda erant, tam ad Legis divinæ Impletionem, quam ad Generis humani Redemptionem. Quæ nobis imputata, & per Fidem accepta, faciunt ut coram DEO juſtificemur.* — And as for υπακοη, ſurely that cannot, without the utmoſt Violence to its native Signification, be ſo applied to the paſſive, as to *exclude* the active Obedience. The *contrary* Notion, if an artful Diſputant ſhould eſpouſe it, might appear ſomewhat plauſible; but *this* has not the leaſt Air of Probability.

† Rom. v. 19.

his actual Tranſgreſſion of the divine Law. Hereby, *Many were made Sinners*; Sinners, in ſuch a Senſe, as to become obnoxious unto Condemnation and Death.—All this, I think, is, from the Apoſtle's own Words, indiſputable. And, if We would preſerve the Propriety of his Antitheſis, or the Force of his Reaſoning, We muſt allow, that the *Obedience of One*, is the Obedience of *CHRIST*; his actual and complete Performance of the whole Law. Hereby, *Many are made Righteous*; righteous, in ſuch a Senſe, as to be releaſed from Condemnation, and veſted with a Title to Life eternal.—How clear and eaſy is this Meaning! How juſt and regular this Argumentation! What Subtilty of Evaſion muſt be uſed, to give a different Turn to the inſtructive Text!

This is the moſt conſiſtent Senſe, in which I can underſtand *Rom.* viii. 5. *That the Righteouſneſs of the Law might be fulfilled in Us, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the SPIRIT.* That the Righteouſneſs required by the holy but broken Law, might be thoroughly accompliſhed. Accompliſhed by our public REPRESENTATIVE, and in our human Nature. So as to be deemed, in point of legal Eſtimation, fulfilled *for* Us and *by* Us*. This, I ſay, is moſt conſiſtent with the Tenour of St. *Paul*'s Arguing, and with the exact Import of his Language.—*With the Tenour of his Arguing:* for, He undertakes to demonſtrate the *Impoſſibility* of our Juſtification, by any perſonal Conformity to the Law. Whereas, if We could ſatisfy its Penalty, and obey its Precepts; or, in other Words, fulfil its Righteouſneſs; this Impoſſibility would ceaſe.—*With the exact Import of his Language:* for, the original Phraſe denotes, not a *ſincere*, but a *complete* Obedience; not what We are enabled to perform, but what

* It is remarked by a judicious Critic, and very valuable Expoſitor, that the Preposition εν ſometimes ſignifies *by* or *for*; and is ſo tranſlated, *Matt.* v. 34. *Heb.* i. 1. See Dr. *Guiſe*'s Expoſition of the *New Teſtament*.

what the Law has a Right * to demand. Which every One must acknowledge, is not fulfilled in any mere Man, since the Fall; but was fulfilled by *JESUS CHRIST*, for our Good, and in our Stead. ——This Interpretation preserves the Sentences distinct, and makes a very natural Introduction for the following Clause; where the Persons interested in this Privilege, are described by their Fruits, *who walk not after the Flesh, but after the SPIRIT.* Implying, that Justification and Sanctification are, like the *ever-corresponding* Motion of our Eyes, inseparable Concomitants; and We vainly pretend to the former, if We continue destitute of the latter.

We have produced positive Proofs of our Doctrine. —— We have heard an Apostle declaring the assured Happiness, and complete Justification of *true Believers.* —— Let Us now observe the same sagacious Judge of Men and Things, discovering the Danger of those *Self justiciaries*, who reject the REDEEMER's Righteousness.

He is filled with the darkest Apprehensions, concerning his Brethren the *Jews.* He is impressed with melancholy Presages, relating to their eternal State †. ——— What was the Cause of this tender Solicitude? Had they cast off all Religion, and given themselves over to gross Immoralities? On they contrary, they were Worshippers of the true GOD; and had, in their Way, not only a *Regard*, but a *Zeal* for his Honour ‡. ——— Wherefore then does this compassionate Father in *Israel* feel the same trembling Uneasiness, for

* It may be worth our while to observe, that St. *Paul*, when treating on this Subject, uses three distinct Words, all derived from the same Original. -- Δικαιωσις, which expresses *Justification*; the accounting or declaring a Person righteous.—Δικαιοσυνη, which never signifies Justification, but *Righteousness*; either performed by Us, or imputed to Us. —— Δικαιωμα, the Phrase which occurs in this Place, and denotes the *Right* or *Demand* of the Law; as that which is indispensibly necessary to the Justification of Man.

† Rom. ix. 2. ‡ Rom. x. 2.

for his Kinſmen according to the Fleſh, as *Eli* felt for the indangered Ark? Himſelf aſſigns the Reaſon. Becauſe, *they being ignorant of GOD's Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the Righteouſneſs of GOD**. Not knowing that immaculate Holineſs, which the perfect Nature, and equally perfect Law of the moſt High GOD, require —— being wilfully ignorant of that conſummate Obedience, which an incarnate GOD vouchſafed to perform, for the Juſtification of his People — they ſedulouſly, but fooliſhly endeavoured, to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs; to make it, ſcanty and decrepit as it was, the Baſis of their Hopes. —— Thus were they reſting their everlaſting ALL on a Bottom, not precarious only, but irreparably ruinous. A boundleſs *Eternity* the Fabric! Yet they built (wonder O Heavens!) on the *Foam* of the Waters! And (which added Stubbornneſs to their Folly) in avowed Contempt of that ſtrong and ſure Foundation, laid by GOD's own Hand in *Sion*. ——— For this, the good Apoſtle was afflicted, with "great "Heavineſs and continual Sorrow." For this, He made the Prophet's pathetic Complaint his own; *Oh! that my Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might bewail, Day and Night* †, the incorrigible Perverſeneſs of my People! *For my People have committed two Evils:* in not thankfully ſubmitting to the Righteouſneſs of GOD, *they have forſaken the Fountain of living Waters:* in attempting to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, *they have hewed themſelves out Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns, that can hold no Water* ‡.

Having ſhewed *their* fatal Error, He ſtrengthens his Repreſentation, by diſplaying the happy Succeſs of the *Gentiles* —— *What ſhall We ſay then?* This, however improbable it may ſeem, We confidently affirm, *That the Gentiles, who followed not after Righteouſneſs*; who had no Knowledge of it, and no Concern about it; even

* Rom. x. 3. † Jer. ix. 1. ‡ Jer. ii. 13.

even they *have attained to Righteouſneſs* *. —— Strange Aſſertion! How is this poſſible! Doubtleſs, the Righteouſneſs which they attained, could not be any perſonal Righteouſneſs. Of this they were totally deſtitute. Inſtead of practiſing moral Virtues, or religious Duties, they were immerſed in Senſuality, and abandoned to Idolatry. It muſt therefore be the evangelical, the imputed Righteouſneſs, *even that which* was wrought by *CHRIST*, and *is* received *by Faith* †.

Iſrael, in the mean time, the nominal *Iſrael*, *who* with great Pretenſions to Sanctity, and many coſtly Oblations, *followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs*, *hath not attained to the Law of Righteouſneſs*. Attained! They have done nothing leſs. They are fallen vaſtly ſhort of it; they are pronounced guilty by it; they ſtand condemned before it ‡. —*Wherefore* did they ſo groſly miſtake, and ſo grievouſly miſcarry? *Becauſe* they forſook the good old Way, in which *Abraham*, *David*, and their pious Anceſtors walked. They adopted

* Surely, this muſt ſignify more, than "attaining to the *Profeſſion* of a Religion, whereby they may be juſtified and ſaved." To this Multitudes attain, who continue, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *ſtout-hearted*, *and far from Righteouſneſs*. Who derive no real Benefit from their Profeſſion; but are rendered utterly inexcuſable, and liable to more aggravated Condemnation.

† Surely, *the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, cannot conſiſt "in humbly *committing* the Soul to *CHRIST*, in the Way "that he hath appointed." According to this Notion, the juſtifying Righteouſneſs would ſpring from Ourſelves; would be conſtituted by an Act of our own, and not by the perfect Obedience of our LORD.

I am ſorry to ſee this, and the preceding Interpretation, in the Works of an *Expoſitor*, whoſe Learning I admire, whoſe Piety I reverence, and whoſe Memory I honour. Yet I muſt ſay, on this Occaſion, with one of the antient Philoſophers? *Amicus Plato*, *amicus Socrates*, *ſed magis amica Veritas*.

‡ This, I apprehend, is the Purport of the Apoſtle's Speech, when He tells Us, that his Countrymen *had not attained unto the Law of Righteouſneſs*. He uſes the Figure μειωσις, and means more than He expreſſes. Somewhat like the dramatic Poet, who ſays of certain literary Pretenders,

adopted a new Scheme; and would fain have ſubſtituted their own, inſtead of relying on a SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. *They ſought* for Juſtification, *not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law* *. A Method, which their Fathers knew not; which their GOD ordained not; and which proved, as it always will prove, not only abortive, but deſtructive. — At this Stone they ſtumbled; on this Rock they ſplit. Let their Ruin be a *Way-mark*, and the Apoſtle's Obſervation a *Light-houſe* to my *Theron*.

Our zealous Writer tries every Expedient. He mingles Hope with Terror. Having pointed out the *Rock*, on which the *Iſraelites* ſuffered Shickwreck; He directs Us to the *Haven*, in which Sinners may caſt Anchor, and find Safety. He gives Us a fine deſcriptive View of the *Chriſtian*'s complete Happineſs. He opens (if I may continue the Metaphor) a free and ample Port for periſhing Souls. Not formed by a Neck of Land, or a Ridge of Mountains, but by a magnificent Chain of ſpiritual Bleſſings. All proceeding from, all terminating in, that precious Corner-ſtone *JESUS CHRIST. Who of GOD is made unto Us Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, and Redemption* ‡. *Wiſdom*, to enlighten our ignorant Minds. *Righteouſneſs* †, to juſtify our guilty Perſons. *Sanctification* †, to renew our depraved Natures. *Redemption*, to reſcue Us from all Evil; and render Us, both

Qui ſe primos eſſe rerum omnium exiſtimant
Nec tamen ſunt.

That is, *they are quite the reverſe.* ——— Or like the Prophet in the Cloſe of this Chapter, who aſſures the Believers in *JESUS*, *They ſhall not be aſhamed*; that is, they ſhall be *encouraged, emboldened, eſtabliſhed.*

* Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32.

‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

† † *Righteouſneſs* and *Sanctification*; the former *imputed*, the latter *inherent*. This preſerves a *Diſtinction* between the noble Articles, and aſſigns to each a grand Share in the Oeconomy of Salvation. —— To ſay that, if one of the Bleſſings is communicated by way of Imputation, the other ſhould be communicated in the ſame Manner, ſeems to be *cavilling*, rather than *arguing*. Becauſe, the Subjects are of a different Nature; and therefore muſt be enjoyed in a different Way. ——— The *Cocoa* Tree is, to the *American*,

both in Body and Soul, perfectly and eternally happy. — Let it be remarked how carefully our inspired Writer sets aside all *Sufficiency*, as well as all *Merit* in Man. He represents the whole of our Salvation, both in its Procurement and Application, as a Work of freest Grace. *CHRIST* is, and not We Ourselves, the Author of this glorious Restoration, the Cause of this great Felicity. *He is made* all this unto Us —— *How?* Not by our own Resolution and Strength; but *of GOD*, by the Agency of his mighty Power, and blessed SPIRIT. He shews Us the all-sufficient Fullness of *CHRIST*. *He* brings Us by ardent Longings to *CHRIST*. *He* implants Us into *CHRIST*, and makes Us Partakers of his Merits.

In the Process of the same Epistle, the sacred Penman enumerates the *constituent Parts* of that great Salvation, which the SON of GOD has procured for ruined Sinners. *But Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD**. Ye are *washed*; cleansed from the Filth, and discharged from the Guilt, of all your Iniquities. Ye are *sanctified*, delivered from the Death of Sin, and endued with a living Principle of Holiness. Ye are *justified*; restored to a State of Acceptance with GOD, and invested with a Title to eternal Glory. All which inestimable Prerogatives are conferred upon the true Believer, *in the Name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST*; in consideration of his atoning Blood and meritorious Righteousness. *By the SPIRIT of our GOD*; through the Efficacy of his Operation, revealing *CHRIST*, and working Faith in the Heart.

Some Gentlemen have talked of a *new remedial* Law; whereas, the Apostle declares, that *CHRIST is the End of the* old, the unalterable, the *Mosaic Law, for Righteousness to every One that believeth* †. — Follow

American, Food and Clothing, a Habitation and domestic Utensils. But must We suppose it, administering to *all* these Uses, in *one* and the *same* unvaried Method? Because, in one Respect it is eaten, in another it is wore, must it be thus applied in all? I believe, the illiterate Savage, who enjoys the several Gifts, need not be taught the Absurdity of such a Supposition.

* 1 Cor. vi. 11. † Rom. x. 4.

low the Course of a River; it will constantly lead You to the Ocean. Trace the Veins of the Body; they invariably unite in the Heart. Mark likewise the Tendency of the Law; it no less constantly and invariably conducts You to *CHRIST*, as the Center of its Views, and the Consummation of its Demands. —— The *moral* Law aims, at discovering our Guilt, and demonstrating our inexpressible Need of a SAVIOUR.—The *ceremonial* points Him out, as suffering in our Stead; making Reconciliation for Iniquity; and purging away every Defilement with his Blood —— They *both* direct the wretched Transgressor, to renounce Himself, and fly to the REDEEMER. Who alone has paid that perfect Obedience. and brought in that everlasting Righteousness, which the Sinner wants, and the Law exacts. Who is, therefore, the only proper *Accomplishment* of the one, and the only suitable *Supply* for the other.

What is the grand Design of the whole Scriptures? St. *Paul*, displaying their sublime Origin, and enumerating the gracious Purposes, they are intended to serve, writes thus: *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD; and is profitable —— for Doctrine*, to declare and establish religious Truth —— *for Reproof*, to convince of Sin, and to refute Error — *for Correction**, or Renovation of the Heart, and Reformation of the Life — *for Instruction in Righteousness*, in that Righteousness, which could never have been learned from any other Book, and in which alone sinful Men may appear with Comfort before their GOD

We have seen the principal *Scope* of the *Law*, and the leading *Design* of the *Scriptures*. Let Us add one Inquiry more. What is the chief *Office* of the SPIRIT? —— If all these coincide, and uniformly terminate in the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*; We have a Confirmation of its *Reality* and *Excellence*, great as Man can desire, I had almost said, great as GOD can impart.—What says our LORD upon this Point? *When*

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. Προς επανορθωσιν.

When He, the SPIRIT of Truth is come, He ſhall convince * *the World of Sin, of Righteouſneſs, and of Judgment. Of Sin, becauſe they believe not in me: of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to my FATHER, and ye ſee me no more: of Judgment, becauſe the Prince of this World is judged* †. ——— Is it poſſible for Words to be more *weighty* and *comprehenſive?* Here is a Summary of Chriſtian Faith, and of Chriſtian Holineſs. Not that *ſuperficial* Holineſs, which is patched up of devotional Forms, and goes no farther than external Performances: but that which is *vital*, and ſprings from the Heart; conſiſts in Power, not in mere Profeſſion; whoſe Praiſe, if not of Men, who are ſmitten with pompous Outſides, is ſure to be of GOD, who diſtinguiſhes the Things which are excellent.

He ſhall convince the World of Sin; of original and actual Sin. The Sin of their Nature, as well as the Sin of their Life; the Sin of their beſt Deeds, no leſs than of their criminal Commiſſions, and blameable Omiſſions. Above all, of their ſinning againſt the ſovereign, the only Remedy, by Unbelief; *becauſe they believe not on me.*. —— He ſhall convince *of Righteouſneſs*; of the Divine REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs, which the foregoing Conviction muſt render peculiarly welcome. Convince them, that it was wrought out in behalf of diſobedient and defective Mortals; that it is abſolutely perfect, and ſufficient to juſtify even the moſt Ungodly. Of all which an inconteſtable Proof is given, by his Reſurrection from the Dead, his triumphant Aſcenſion into Heaven, and Seſſion at the Right-hand of his FATHER; *becauſe I go to my FATHER, and ye ſee me no more.*

* *He ſhall convince*, ſeems to be the moſt proper Tranſlation of ελεγξει. As it implies the *ſure Succeſs*, which attends the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT. —— Man may *reprove*, and no Conviction enſue. Whereas that Almighty AGENT not only reproves, but reproves *with Power*; ſo as to determine the Judgment, and ſway the Affections.

† John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

more *. — He ſhall convince of *Judgment*. Thoſe, who are humbled under a Senſe of Guilt, and juſtified through an imputed Righteouſneſs, ſhall be taught by happy Experience, that *the Prince of this World is condemned* and dethroned in their Hearts: That their Souls are reſcued from the Tyranny of Satan; are made victorious over their Corruptions; and reſtored to the Liberty —— the glorious Liberty of the Children of GOD.

You wonder, perhaps, that I have not ſtrengthened my Cauſe, by any Quotation from the Epiſtle to the *Galatians*. What I deſign, my dear *Theron*, is not to accumulate, but to ſelect Arguments. However, that I may not diſappoint an Expectation ſo reaſonable, I proceed to lay before You a very nervous Paſſage, from that maſterly Piece of ſacred Controverſy. ——— Only, let me juſt obſerve, that the Epiſtle was written to Perſons, who had embraced Chriſtianity, and profeſſed an Aſſiance in *CHRIST*. But would fain have *joined* Circumciſion, would fain have *ſuperadded* their own religious Duties, to the Merits of their SAVIOUR; in order to conſtitute, at leaſt, *ſome* Part of their juſtifying Righteouſneſs. Againſt which Error, the vigilant and indefatible Aſſertor of *the Truth as it is in JESUS*, remonſtrates—*We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of JESUS CHRIST, even We have believed in JESUS CHRIST; that We might be juſtified by the Faith of CHRIST, and not by the Works of the Law; for, by the Works of the Law ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified* †.

We,

* For, if the Work had been imperfect in any degree, our REDEEMER, inſtead of taking up his ſtated and final Reſidence in the Legions of Glory, muſt have deſcended again into this inferior World, to complete what was deficient.

† *Gal.* ii. 15, 16. Obſervable, very obſervable is the Zeal of our Apoſtle, in this determined Stand, againſt the *moſt ſpecious*, and therefore the moſt dangerous, Incroachments of Error. To expreſs his ardent Concern for the Truth and Purity of the Goſpel,

We, who are Jews by Nature, the Descendents of *Abraham*, and GOD's peculiar People; have the Tables of his Law, and the Ordinances of his Worship: We who, in Point of Privileges, are greatly superior to the *Gentile* Nations, and have all possible Advantages for establishing (if such a Thing were practicable) a Righteousness of our own; What have *We* done? ——— *We have believed on JESUS CHRIST:* We have renounced Ourselves; disclaimed whatever is our own; and depended wholly on the Righteousness of *CHRIST.* —— For what End? That by this *Faith in CHRIST*, which receives his Righteousness; pleads his Righteousness; and presents nothing but his Righteousness before the Throne, *We might be justified.* — What Motive has induced Us to this Practice? A firm Persuasion, that by *the Works of the Law*, by sincere Obedience, or personal Holiness, *no Man living* has been, and no Man living *can be, justified before GOD.*

Are You tired, *Theron?* Have I fatigued your Attention, instead of convincing your Judgment? ——— I will not harbour such a Suspicion. It is pleasing to converse with Those, who have travelled into *foreign* Countries, and seen the *Wonders* of Creation. We hearken to their Narratives with Delight. Every new Adventure whets our Curiosity, rather than palls our Appetite. Must it not then afford a more sublime Satisfaction, to be entertained with the Discourses of a Person, who had, not indeed sailed round the World, but made a Journey to the *third Heavens?* Who had been admitted into the *Paradise* of GOD, and heard Things of infinite Importance, and unutterable Dignity? —— This was the Privilege of that incomparable Man, whose Observations and Discoveries,

pel, the *Works of the Law* are mentioned no less than three Times, and as often *excluded* from the Affair of Justification. *The Faith of CHRIST* likewise is thrice inculcated, and as often asserted to be the *only* Method of becoming righteous before GOD.

ries, I have been presenting to my Friend. And I promise myself. He will not complain of Wearineſs, if I enrich my Epiſtle with one or two more of thoſe glorious Truths.

GOD hath made HIM to be Sin for Us who knew no Sin; that We might, not be put into a Capacity of acquiring a Righteouſneſs of our own, but *be made the Righteouſneſs of GOD in Him* *. In this Text, the *double* Imputation of our Sin to *CHRIST*, and of *CHRIST's* Righteouſneſs to Us, is moſt emphatically taught, and moſt charmingly contraſted ——— Moſt *emphatically taught*. For, We are ſaid, not barely to be righteous, but to be made Righteouſneſs itſelf; and not Righteouſneſs only, but (which is the utmoſt that Language can reach) the Righteouſneſs of GOD. — Moſt *charmingly contraſted*. For, One cannot but aſk, In what Manner, *CHRIST* was made Sin? In the very ſame Manner, We are made Righteouſneſs. *CHRIST* knew no *actual* Sin; yet, upon his mediatorial Interpoſition on our Behalf, He was treated by Divine Juſtice, as a ſinful Perſon. We likewiſe are deſtitute of all *legal* Righteouſneſs; Yet, upon our receiving *CHRIST*, and believing in his Name, We are regarded by the Divine MAJESTY, as righteous Creatures. This therefore cannot, in either Caſe, be *intrinſically*; but muſt be, in both Inſtances, *imputatively*. ——— Gracious divinely gracious Exchange †! pregnant with amazing Goodneſs, and rich with ineſtimable Benefits. The inceſſant Triumph of the *ſtrong*, the ſovereign Conſolation of the *weak* Believer!

Ceaſe

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

† *Ita ſcilicet* mirabili Permutatione *Mala noſtra in ſe recepit, ut Bona ſua nobis largiretur; recepit Miſeriam, ut largiretur Miſericordiam; recepit Maledictionem, ut Benedictionis ſuæ compotes nos faceret; recepit Mortem, ut Vitam conferret; recepit Peccatum, ut Juſtitiam impertiretur.* Thus writes the judicious *Turretin.* To which, in concurrence with the accurate *Witſius*, I ſubſcribe both with Hand and Heart.

Ceaſe your Exultation, cries One, and come down from your Altitudes. The Term uſed in this Verſe denotes, not ſo properly, *Sin*, as an *Offering* for Sin.—This is a mere Suppoſal, which I may as reaſonably deny, as Another affirm. Since the Word occurs, much *more frequently* in the former Signification, than in the latter; and ſince, by giving it the latter Signification in the Paſſage before Us, We very much impair, if not totally deſtroy, the Apoſtle's beautiful *Antitheſis*.

However; not to contend, but to allow the Remark. I borrow my Reply from a brave old *Champion* * for the Truth of the Goſpel: "This Text, "ſays He, invincibly proveth, That We are not juſti-"fied in GOD's Sight by Righteouſneſs inherent "in Us, but by the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* im-"puted to Us through Faith." After which He adds, what I make my Anſwer to the Objection; "That *CHRIST* was made Sin for Us, becauſe "He was a Sacrifice for Sin, We confeſs: but *there-*"*fore* was He a Sacrifice for Sin, becauſe our Sin was "imputed to Him, and puniſhed in Him?"——— The poor Delinquents under the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation, who brought their Sin-offering to the Altar of the LORD, were directed to lay their Hand on the devoted Beaſt; ſignifying, by this Uſage, the tranſferring of Guilt from the Offerer to the Sacrifice. Conformably to the Import of this Ceremony, *CHRIST* aſſumed our Demerit; like a true *piacular* Victim, ſuffered the Puniſhment, which We had deſerved; and which, without ſuch a Commutation,

* See Dr. *Fulk*'s Annotation on the Place, in that valuable Piece of antient Controverſy and Criticiſm, *The Examination of the Rhemiſh Teſtament*. Which, though not altogether ſo elegant and refined in the Language, nor ſo delicate and genteel in the Manner, as might be wiſhed: is nevertheleſs full of *ſound* Divinity, the *weighty* Arguments, and *important* Obſervations.——Would the young Student be taught to diſcover the *very Sinews* of Popery, and be enabled to give an effectual Blow to that Complication of Errors, I ſcarce know a Treatiſe better calculated for the Purpoſe.

tion, We must have undergone. So that our LORD's being made a Sin-offering for Us, does by no means invalidate, but very much confirm our Doctrine. It necessarily implies the Translation of our Iniquity to his Person; and on the Principles of Analogy, must infer the Imputation of *his Righteousness* to our Souls.

One Passage more permit me to transcribe into my Paper; and, at the same Time, to wish, that it may be written on both our Hearts. Written, not with Ink and Pen, no, nor with the Point of a Diamond, but with the Finger of the living GOD. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him; not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST, the Righteousness which is of GOD through Faith* *.

Be pleased to observe, that in this Confession of Faith, and with Reference to the Case of Justification, the Apostle renounces all those Acts of supposed Righteousness, which were *antecedent* to his Conversion, —— Nor does He repudiate them only, but all those more excellent Services, by which he was so eminently distinguished, even *after* his Attachment to *CHRIST*, and Engagement in the *Christian* Ministry. As though He should say — "The Privilege of "being a *Hebrew* by Birth; the Prerogative of be- "ing a *Pharisee* by Profession; together with a Be- "haviour exemplary, and a Reputation unblameable; "all these, which were once reckoned my highest "Gain, as soon as I became acquainted with the glo- "rious Perfections of *CHRIST*, *I counted* † *Loss* "*for Him.* — And now, though I have been a *Disci-* "*ple* many Years; have walked in all holy Con- "versation and Godliness; have endured, for my "Divine MASTER's Name, Tribulations above "measure;

* Phil. iii. 8, 9. † Ἡγημαι *I have counted.*

" meaſure; have laboured more abundantly, and " more ſucceſsfully than all the Apoſtles; yet, even " *theſe* and *all other* Attainments, of what Kind or of " what Date ſoever, I *count* * but Loſs, for the tran- " ſcendent Excellency of *CHRIST JESUS* my " LORD.—*Yea doubtleſs* †; it is my deliberate and " ſtedfaſt Reſolution; what I have moſt ſeriouſly " adopted, and do publickly avow; that, ſpecious as " all theſe Acquirements may ſeem, and valuable as " they may be in other Reſpects, I reckon them *but* " *Dung*, that I may win *CHRIST* ‡. They fade " into nothing, they dwindle into *leſs than nothing*, " if ſet in competition with his matchleſs Obedience: " and were they to ſuperſede my Application to his " Merits, or weaken my Reliance on his Mediation, " they would be not contemptible only, but injuri- " ous—irreparably injurious—*Loſs itſelf.*"

You will aſk, If He rejects all his own Righteouſneſs, on *what* are his Hopes fixed?—On a Foundation, *extenſive* as the Obedience of the REDEEMER's

* Ἡγεῦμαι, relates to the preſent Time, and comprehends preſent Attainments, *I do count.*—Not ſome, or the greateſt Part, but *all Things*—What? Is a Courſe of Sobriety, and the Exerciſe of Morality, to be reckoned as Dung? *All Things*, ſays the Apoſtle.—What? Is our moſt elevated Devotion, and inlarged Obedience, to be degraded at this monſtrous Rate? *All Things*, ſays the Apoſtle. This is his invariable Reply. And We may venture to affirm, That *He had the Mind of CHRIST.*

† Perhaps, ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε may be tranſlated, *but truly.* As if He had ſaid, " But why ſhould I mention any more Particu- " lars? *In truth*, I count *all* Things, *&c.*

‡ Διὰ Χριστὸν —— διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον —— ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω —— plainly imply this *comparative* or *relative* Senſe. Virtues, which are the Fruits of the SPIRIT, and Labours, which are a Bleſſing to Mankind, muſt not be reckoned *abſolutely* or in *all* Reſpects deſpicable; but only in a limited and qualified Acceptation. Deſpicable, not in themſelves, but as compared with the divinely perfect Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, or as referred to the infinitely important Article of Juſtification.

That *Aſpaſio*, in this whole Paragraph, ſpeaks the Senſe of our Church, will appear from the following Extract:—— " The " Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſaith, He doth glory, in what? In the Con- " tempt of his own Righteouſneſs; and that He looketh for the " Righteouſneſs of GOD by Faith."

Homily of Salvation, Part II.

MER's Life and Death, *unshaken* as the Dignity of his eternal Power and GODHEAD. They are fixed on *the Righteousness which is of GOD*; the Righteousness which GOD the FATHER, in unsearchable Wisdom, provided; and which GOD the SON, in unutterable Goodness, wrought. ——— Do You inquire, *How* He came to be invested with this Righteousness? The Answer is ready and satisfactory. It was by the Application of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Instrumentality of *Faith*. ——— Lest Any should imagine, That this Faith might be substituted, instead of his own Obedience to the Law; He puts an apparent Difference between the Righteousness which justifies, and the Faith by which it is received; not the Righteousness which *consists in*, but is THROUGH *the Faith of CHRIST*. — To shew the great Importance of this Distinction; how earnestly He insisted upon it, as a Preacher; how much it tended to his Consolation, as a *Christian*; He repeats the Sentiment, He reinculcates the Doctrine, *The Righteousness which is of GOD* BY *Faith*.

Will *You* now, *Theron*, or shall *I*, poor unprofitable Creatures, presume to rely on any Performances or any Accomplishments of our own? When that distinguished Saint — a perfect Prodigy of Gifts, of Graces and of Zeal — indefatigable in Labours, unconquerable by Afflictions, and of whose Usefulness there is neither Measure nor End — When *He* denies Himself in every View; depreciates all; disavows all; and makes mention of nothing, but the incomparable Righteousness of his *obedient*, *dying*, *interceding* SAVIOUR.

What shall I say more? Shall I attempt to play the Rhetorician, and borrow the insinuating Arts of Persuasion? This, after all the *cogent Testimonies* produced, and all the *great Authorities* urged, would be a needless Parade. When our Pen is a Sun-beam, there is but little Occasion to dip it in Oil.

Instead of such an Attempt, give me leave to make a frank and honest Confession. I would conceal nothing from my Friend. He should have a Sash to my Breast;

Breaſt; throw it up at his Pleaſure; and ſee all that paſſes within. — Though I never had any Temptation to that pernicious Set of Errors, which paſſes under the Character of *Socinianiſm*; yet I had many Searchings of Heart, and much ſolicitous Inquiry, How far We are indebted to *CHRIST's active* Righteouſneſs. Thoroughly perſuaded, that *Other Foundation can no Man lay, ſave that which is laid, even* JESUS CHRIST*; and that *there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men can be ſaved* †; yet, whether We were not to confine our believing Regards to a *dying* SAVIOUR, was Matter of conſiderable Doubt. — At firſt, I was inclined to acquieſce in the Affirmative. After long Conſideration and many Prayers, my Faith fixed upon the *Whole* of *CHRIST's* mediatorial Undertaking. Which began in his ſpontaneous Submiſſion to the Law; was carried on through all his meritorious Life; and iſſued in his atoning Death. — This is now the Baſis of my Confidence, and the Bulwark of my Happineſs. Hither I fly; here I reſt; as the Dove, after her wearifome and fruitleſs Rovings, returned to *Noah*, and reſted in the Ark.

This Scheme firſt recommended itſelf to my *Affections*; as making the moſt ample Proviſion, for the Security and Repoſe of a guilty Conſcience. Which, when alarmed by the Accuſations of Sin, is very apprehenſive of its Condition; and will not be comforted, till every Scruple is ſatisfied, and all the Obſtructions to its Peace are removed. Thus I reaſoned with myſelf — "Though there is, undoubtedly, ſome-"thing to be ſaid for the other Side of the Queſtion; "yet, this is evidently the ſafeſt Method. And, in "an Affair of infinite Conſequence, who would not "prefer the ſafeſt Expedient? — Should the Righte-"ouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST* be *indiſpenſibly* re-"quiſite, as a Wedding-garment; what will *they* "do, when the great immortal KING appears, who "have refuſed to accept it? Whereas, ſhould it not "prove *ſo abſolutely* neceſſary, yet ſuch a Dependence

* 1 Cor. iii. 11. † Acts iv. 12.

" can never obſtruct our Salvation. It can never be " charged upon Us, as an Article of Contumacy or " Perverſeneſs, that We thought *too meanly* of our " own, *too magnificently* of our LORD's Obedience. " So that let the Die turn either Way, We are ex- " poſed to no Hazard. — This Scheme takes in all, " that the other Syſtems comprehend, and abundantly " more. In this I find no Defect, no Flaw, no Sha- " dow of Inſufficiency. It is ſomewhat like the *per-* " *fect Cube*; which, where-ever it may be thrown, or " however it may fall, is ſure to ſettle upon its Baſe. " —Suppoſing, therefore, the important Beam ſhould " hang in Equilibrio, with reſpect to Argument; " theſe Circumſtances, caſt into the Scale, may very " juſtly be allowed to turn the Ballance."

Upon a more attentive Examination of the Subject, I perceived — That this is the Doctrine of our *national* Church; is inforced by the Atteſtation of our ableſt Divines; and has been, in all Ages, the Conſolation of the moſt eminent Saints: — That it is the genuine Senſe of Scripture; and not ſome inferior or ſubordinate Point, incidentally touched upon by the inſpired Writers, but the *Sum* and *Subſtance* * of their heavenly Meſſage; that which conſtitutes the Vitals of their Syſtem, and is the very Soul of their Religion. On which Account the whole Goſpel is denominated from it, and ſtyled, *The Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs:* — I was farther convinced, That this Way of Salvation magnifies, beyond Compare, the divine Law; is no leſs honourable to all the divine Attributes; and exhibits the

* This Doctrine runs through St. *Paul*'s Writings, like a golden *Warp*. While Privileges, Bleſſings, and evangelical Duties are like a *Woof* (if I may allude to the Ornaments of the Sanctuary) of Blue, of Purple, of Scarlet, and indeed of every pleaſant Colour. *The Righteouſneſs of GOD*, Rom. i. 17. — *The Righteouſneſs from GOD*, Phil. iii. 10. — *Righteouſneſs by Faith*, Rom. iii. 22. — *Righteouſneſs of Faith*, Rom. iv. 11. — *Righteouſneſs without the Law*, Rom. iii. 21. — *Righteouſneſs without Works*, Rom. iv. 6. — *Righteouſneſs in the Blood of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 9. — *Righteouſneſs by the Obedience of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 19. — *Righteouſneſs not our own*, Phil. iii. 9. — *Righteouſneſs imputed by GOD*, Rom. iv. 6, 10, 22.

the ever Bleſſed MEDIATOR in the moſt illuſtrious and the moſt delightful View. — All theſe Conſiderations, under the Influence of the eternal SPIRIT, have determined my *Judgment*, and eſtabliſhed my *Faith*. So that I truſt, neither the Subtilties of Wit, nor the Sneers of Ridicule, nor any other Artifice, ſhall ever be able to ſeparate me from the Grace and Righteouſneſs which are in *JESUS CHRIST*.

Let me now, by way of Concluſion, review that awful Subject, which introduced the Letter. Let me ſuppoſe the JUDGE, who *is at the Door*, actually come: the great and terrible Day, which is haſting forward *, really commenced — Hark! The Trumpet ſounds the univerſal Summons. The Living are ſtruck with a death-like Aſtoniſhment; the Dead ſtart from their ſilent Abodes. — See! The whole Earth takes Fire; the Sun is turned into Darkneſs; and the Stars fall from their Spheres. — Behold! The *LORD JESUS* comes, with Myriads of his Angels. The Judgment is ſet, and the Books are opened.

Obſerve thoſe exemplary *Chriſtians*, whoſe Sentiments I have been collecting. *They* renounce themſelves, and rely on their Glorious SURETY. Methinks, I hear them ſay, Each as they quit their Beds of Duſt; *I will go forth* from the Grave *in thy Strength*, O bleſſed *JESUS*, *and*, at the deciſive Tribunal, *will*

* The ſacred Writers, I obſerve, often remind their Readers of this grand Event; often diſplay this *delightful*, *dreadful* Scene. — Their Manner of Speaking ſhews, that they themſelves lived under the habitual and joyful Expectation of it; as Perſons, who were *looking for*, *and haſting to*, *the Coming of the Day of GOD*. — They repreſent it, not only as *ſure* but *near*; yea, very near, and upon the Point to take place. *The LORD is at Hand. The JUDGE is at the Door. Yet a little while, and HE that ſhall come, will come and will not tarry.* —— The laſt Paſſage is the moſt ſpirited and emphatical of them all; but has loſt much of its Emphaſis, by the *Engliſh* Verſion. It is in the Original μικρον οσον οσον. A beautiful *Pleonaſm*; by which the *Septuagint*, though too often inaccurate in tranſlating the *prophetic* Text, have very happily expreſſed *Iſaiah*'s מְעַט רָגַע Which may, I think, be rendered in our Language, *yet a very*, *very little while*. Heb. x. 37. Iſai. xxvi. 20.

will make mention of thy Righteouſneſs only. — At the ſame time, will You, *Theron*, or ſhall I, ſtand forth and declare — before the innumerable Multitude of anxious Sinners, and adorning Seraphs — " Let thoſe pu-
" ſillanimous Creatures fly for Refuge to their SA-
" VIOUR's Righteouſneſs. We will confide in
" Works, in Accompliſhments of our own. We are
" the Men, who have *perſonally* kept the divine Law,
" and want no *ſuppoſititious* Obedience from Another.
" Let the Eye that glances through Immenſity, and
" penetrates the Receſſes of the Heart; let that holy
" and omniſcient Eye, examine our Temper, and
" ſift our Conduct. We are bold to riſk our Souls,
" and all their immortal Intereſts, on the Iſſue of ſuch
" a Scrutiny."

Perhaps, Your Mind is impreſſed with this *ſolemn Scene*, and your Thoughts recoil at ſuch *daring Preſumption.* If ſo, it will be proper for me to withdraw, and leave You to your own Mediations. At ſuch Moments to obtrude on Your Company, would render me the troubleſome and officious, rather than

The reſpectful and affectionate,

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